The Modern Man

A WEEKLY JOURNAL OF MASCULINE INTEREST.

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DRESS.

Coat-hanger and trouser-stretcher combined; a bargain, 1s. 6d., post free.—Box 3979, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

Homespuns. Lengths for Sporting Coat. Patterns.—Jones, Tweed Merchant, 96, Salop Street, Dudley.

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SPORTS & PASTIMES.

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Wanted, floor stand punch-ball; state particulars, make, etc., lowest price.—Box 5044, "The "Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

For sale, trout rod, 11ft., steel centre, split cane, two tops, lock joints, cork handle, new London maker, 30s.—Box 5045, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London, E.C.

..... Cut here .....

PEN COUPON.

Twelve of these Coupons and a Postal Order for 1s. buys one of THE MODERN MAN Fountain Pens, with 14-carat solid gold nib.

For particulars see page 799.

Cut here

SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

Wanted, secondhand Badmington outdoor poles and net, also lawn mower.—Box 5046, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

Wanted, billiard table to lay on dining-room table; full particulars.—Box 5047, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

Wanted canvas boat, with sail, Berthon, or other collapsible preferred, state price; letters only.—Box 5048, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

Wanted, leather cricket-bag, state price.—Box 5049, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

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SITUATIONS VACANT & WANTED.

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For High-grade Positions see Hapgood's advertisement, page 794.

DIGS.

Young Man seeks digs. in open, hilly country near Manchester. Would join another.—J. Howard, 6, Gore Street, Piccadilly, Manchester.

PHYSICAL CULTURE, &c.

For increasing the height see Arthur Girvan's advertisement on page 790.

MEDICAL, &c.

Blood purifier. Keep you in perfect health; one of the finest known recipes on the market. Recipe with full particulars, post free, 1s. 1d.—Box 4630, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

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Your Teeth as White as Snow. The best powder in the world. Recipe for P.O. 1s.—Box 4161, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

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Sore and Perspiring Feet.—The best preventive known. Recipe for P.O. 1s.—Box 5013, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Camera bargain. No. 6K Klito hand camera, absolutely unused, won as prize, takes twelve quarter plates, Anastigmat lens, F7.7, Automat shutter, rack focussing for portraits, cost £3 3s.; accept £2 10s., or nearest offer.—Box 5016, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

"The Modern Man" pocket knife, a treasure, two fine steel blades, in fine English oxydised steel handles, best make, post free 1s. 1½d.; money returned in full if not satisfied.—Box 4596, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

A bargain, coat-hanger, with trouser-stretcher, new, post free P.O. 1s. 8d., or two for 2s. 9d., carriage paid.—Box 4595, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

FREE, 7s. 6d. Safety Razor, with extra blades, absolutely free to all sending P.O. 1s. 6d. (3d. extra for postage and packing) for one of our marvellous 3s. 6d. Pocket-knives, English oxydised steel handles, best make; money returned in full if not satisfied.—Box 4670, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

5,000 to clear. 7s. 6d. safety razor with extra blades, 1s. 1d., post free.—Box 4604, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

Guaranteed Money-Making Opportunity. Send postcard immediately for particulars of this novel scheme.—Expert Green, 54, Humber Street East, Hull.

Conjuring Catalogue Free. Please send early. — Vandy, next Wyndham's Theatre (Dept. MM), London.

A Fountain Pen for 7d.; post free. Our latest invention, the "Swift" Fountain Pen, is an absolutely world's wonder; always ready for use; best finish.—Send P.O. or stamps 7d. to-day to Box 4597, "The Modern Man," 21, Tudor Street, London.

The Modern Man

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CHEEK.

There have lately been great rejoicings at Kirkdale, ydenham, where Miss Catherine Cow has just celebrated er 102nd birthday. Now, here is the very lady who ought demonstrate the equality of Woman with Man by start- g an Old Moo-er's Almanack of her own!

* * *

A certain kind of fungus, so I learn from the report of lecture, is called "the Jew's ear." Is this a variety that hard to bite?

* * *

"Love and a Flat" was the headline which a daily aper gave to a recent legal action. After studying the facts, he reader was left in doubt as to whether the word "flat" eferred to a place of residence or the male party in the tigation.

* * *

Said the Judge at Shoreditch County Court: "A judg- ent summons is not a thumb-screw." No; but it is a very npleasant "process," all the same.

* * *

The Richmond (Surrey) Corporation have decided that ll lads employed in road-scavenging must attend evening ontinuation classes. There seems to be a rather Wackford queers-esque touch about this:

"G-u-t, Gut. T-e-r, Ter. *Gutter*. Now, go and clean ne." What?

* * *

To a woman, who complained that her husband was lways drinking, Mr. Plowden gave the kindly advice: Look upon him as a kind of baby. Nurse him a bit." udden measures are often dangerous; and it is to be hoped hat the lady will allow him just a *leetle* drop of rum in his ilk-bottle at first.

* * *

A Divorce Court co-respondent was recently described s "The Beau Brummel of South London." His latest suit" has cost him £150.

* * *

The winner of the Saturday Selling Handicap Steeple- hase at Haydock Park is called Piccadilly. Very fast and nore than a bit of a bounder.

* * *

With reference to the "Elusive Laird" case, what dealer n motor-cars was it who observed, "I refuse to trust Mr. McCallum More"?

* * *

A recent advertisement runs: "Sitting-rooms, bed- ooms, and bed-sitting rooms. *Bard* as required." A leasant improvement on most establishments of the kind, here the minstrelsy is solely provided by the slavey in the asement.

* * *

Sir A. T. Quiller-Couch says that "Every man is neces- ary to every other man." Bill the Burglar is not greedy, nd generously offers to dispense with a few policemen, and nagistrates, and men like that.

J. S. Cox.

NO DIFFERENCE.

Mr. "Bill" Crooks, M.P., who has been tumbling down and hurting himself, is fond of telling this story.

An out-of-work applied for a job at a ship-building yard and was refused. He pleaded hard, but the foreman was obdurate, though not a bad-hearted man.

"Sorry," he said, "but fact is there's barely enough work to go round the hands we've already got."

"Lor' bless you, guv'nor," said the unfortunate, "don't let that trouble you. The little bit I'll do won't make no bloomin' difference."

FLAG STARTS.

Throughout the winter months from which we have just emerged all races have been started to a flag, and not by means of the starting-gate; for the latter is not used under National Hunt rules. The reason of the adherence of the N.H. Committee to the old-fashioned flag is probably that the small "fields" and long courses render the intricate machine unnecessary.

There is, in fact, one race under Jockey Club (flat-racing) rules which is still started to a flag. This is the Goodwood Cup, the distance of which is two and a half miles, and for which the officials of the meeting deem it unnecessary to erect a "gate."

PLAYING "AGAINST THE NAP."

Here is a hint on the subject of "side" which few billiard players outside professional circles know. It deals with the playing of "long jennies."

As most of us know, under ordinary circumstances we put an enormous amount of reverse side on our own ball, which has the effect of making it spin off the object-ball and, hugging the cushion all the way, drop into the pocket; but this should only be done when playing *with* the nap.

When playing a long jenny *against* the nap of the cloth, put on *forcing* side. If you don't, the action of the nap will have the effect of forcing your ball right away from the cushion.

SCOTSMAN ENOUGH.

When Mr. John Lavery, A.R.A., was a struggling painter, he held a "one-man exhibition," at which the late Mr. William Forbes, the railway manager, bought several pictures. In forwarding his cheque, Mr. Forbes expressed his pleasure at being able to help a brother Scotsman, for, like many other people, he imagined that Mr. Lavery, as a member of the "Glasgow School," which he was to make famous, was a Caledonian.

Mr. Lavery wrote acknowledging the cheque and pointing out that he was no Scotsman, but an Irishman.

"But," he added, "I am Scotsman enough to have waited till your cheque was cleared before letting you know my true nationality."

Mr. Lavery's confession, however, did not prevent the railway magnate and art patron from continuing to be a good friend to him.

AN ALL-ROUND SPORTSMAN.

Major Henry Lawrence Fleming, who so narrowly lost the Amateur Billiards Championship to Mr. H. C. Virr a week or two ago, was a very fine all-round athlete in his younger days.

Educated at Edinburgh Collegiate School and Blair Lodge, he held the world's schoolboy record for throwing the cricket-ball, played football for Blair Lodge first eleven, and, later, cricket for Scotland.

Proceeding to India, where he served with the 36th Regiment of Sikhs, he became billiards and lawn tennis champion of all India, was admittedly one of the best polo players in a land of crack poloists, and a noted amateur jockey, both on the flat and over the sticks.

He was at one time fancied for the Amateur Golf Championship at home.

Major Fleming's victory in the Amateur Billiards Championship of 1909 surprised most people, but not the writer, who had known him since boyhood, and often played billiards with him, generally receiving 90 points in 100. Had the writer known where to get the money on he could have made a tidy haul, for at the opening of the tournament 100 to 1 could easily have been obtained against the dark horse from India.

A CANINE FRAGMENT.

THE CLOCKWORK DOG

By SIDNEY NORTH.

Among those who steal the bones of my own dogs is to be numbered one rough-coated fox-terrier called Taps—but in these days, sad to tell, not called often.

He is known to my friends as the clockwork dog, and there is so little bend in his straight, shaggy, little legs when he runs that it seems indeed that his master has wound him up somewhere in the ribs and set him going.

Taps moves mechanically, after the fashion of all those in the books who have no real interest in life, and Taps is really like those people too!

Some two years ago I call him to mind first of all. He was—think of it!—a wedding present, this Taps, to a young couple who live on just a very small income some way out of the village. These young Smith people were rather proud of their wedding present, for, barring an ear that refused to come up when Taps pricked the other, he was very nearly "fit for show," which is a magical thing, as all dog-fanciers who know nothing about showing are aware. To the expert eye he has doubtless ten other faults, though so far as I can see there are not more than this ear to set him really far back.

What a white dog he was; how he took the conceit out of our best village laundresses, to be sure! Yet, as those of critical eye pointed out when the Smiths first had him, he was the sort that would take a rare lot of tubbing, being long-coated. In addition it was seen early in his life that he was by way of being a pickle and was fatally fond of rolling in ploughed and wet land.

His peerless appearance, then, was due to the attention of the young Smith people. Oftentimes I would look in on Smith for a quiet pipe and find the kitchen (where we preferred to smoke it when the day girl had gone) under what would have been hoar frost if it had only glistened. As a matter of fact it was common whiting, and I would discover the charming Mrs. Smith in cooking sleeves and a great deal of apron, brushing out the coat of Taps with a stiff brushing and clouds of powder.

"Now you're more like a little gentleman," Smith would say. "Behave like one."

The way to behave like a gentleman if you are a dog is to beg first of all, and then you offer a polite paw to the visitor.

Taps, not a clockwork dog then, would do this in an individual, if thoroughly canine, manner, and emit a distinctive bark that varied sometimes. And like an affectionate dog of spirit you had but to pat your knee for Taps to jump up to it. Also if Smith and I went out with a lantern down to the fowl run Taps would prove himself in those days mighty among ratters.

And to think that this is the very dog who this morning passed the rat holes by the dykes that run through the common for all the world as though they were not there!

He billocked about in the long grasses when I called to him, rooted around pig-like, and presently came to me with his clockwork run, and his clockwork squeak (well might I have nipped him in an indiarubber stomach to get that squeak), and he had his clockwork trick that never varies. He has lost the instinct for all else except that and stealing the bones put out for my dogs; even the bones he considers stones after a while, and comes dementedly squeaking to the first passer-by to throw them for him.

Stones are his only joy in life. He brought one this morning, a good round one which must have given joy to his wild little heart.

One must throw the stone to get rid of him, and it seems good in these days to get rid of that little black, bedraggled, and dirty Taps—he who once put the village washerwomen to shame at their very tubs!

With clockwork movement he patters off for it, clockwork little jaws gobble at it, a shaggy neck raised with a clockwork jerk chucks it invariably to his back teeth, a clockwork little stump of a tail moves from side to side detachedly as he deposits it at your feet.

Let him follow you at such an unvarying distance that you might have him on a string and you may go as far as his master's gate with him.

If it is night you may hear them say as he squeaks Teddy-Bearly at the door, "Oh, it's only the wretched Taps back again."

Then you realise what key sets him going, and the key is his master's kick.

Explaining, it behoves me to set down that one may hear the wail of the heir of all the Smiths ere the door closes on the little clockwork dog outside.

Under these circumstances Taps pricks up his one workable ear and listens.

Then he emits an indiarubber squeak in rivalry with that of the infant who has ousted him from his place in the affections of his master and mistress.

Down comes the ear, to match its neighbour, and down goes the little stump of a tail, and Taps ambles mechanically away to seek a night's shelter beneath a hedge.

He is no philosopher, and understands nothing of the changing affections of a fickle world.

TERRIBLE TERRITORIAL POSTERS.

Have you noticed the illustrated posters issued and displayed in Post Offices to attract Territorial recruits? They are simply terrible.

Apart from their general tawdriness and cheap sentiment of design and appeal, the figure of Britannia is a figure of mockery.

The British woman is often accused of having large feet, and, so far as the modern athletic British woman is concerned, the charge is not altogether unfounded; but why call attention to the fact as this poster does?

In it poor dear Britannia not only has enormous feet, but the ugliest ankles imaginable, and among feminine defects coarse ankles are not the least repellent.

One is hardly likely to fire the patriotism and imagination of young men by asking them to enlist for the sake of a lady the size and shape of whose feet are calculated to give even the least sensitive and most indifferent to female charms among them pain, and anything but "exquisite pain."

LONDON CAMEOS.

XVI.—THE COLUMN.

There is only one column, to those who love their London, the Nelson column, standing lonely and supreme in the middle of Trafalgar Square.

At its feet crouch the mighty lions, noble and restful, facing to all quarters—like the guardians of a king, like the spirits of those patriots who have died splendidly for England. Elevated up there, above the puny passing traffic, the myriad comings and goings of the ant-like creature Man, towers the Figure, solitary, black and grand—the little Admiral with the blind eye and the empty sleeve—now the watcher over London, the everlasting Man on the Look Out.

There he remains, his left hand on his sword, his shoulders squared—more dignified than ever he could have appeared in life—but now throned high, an unalterable testimony to the love and gratitude of his countrymen.

There is a splendour about the Figure which catches one at times with almost a gasp of ecstasy. Riding down Whitehall the other afternoon on a 'bus—an early spring afternoon of leaden mist and cloud—I saw it, dim, austere, tremendous. It had an immortality, an intangibility, like a form coming down from the clouds. Its pose had the potency of a god. It might have been an archangel from heaven, draped in raven wings, speeding down with a message—a message to a slumbering land. . . . The column below was invisible. . . .

Who, with heart of feeling at all, can look at the Column on a summer's evening when a blaze of sunset glory lights up the heavens behind it—can look at it and not be afflicted with the ache of beauty?

It is like a woman's mood, ever changeable and ever lovely. And yet it is ever still, immutably grand and calm and dignified.

E. A.

Ever the Column is wonderful

1,600 DESERTERS FROM THE ARMY

Astounding Figures which Surpass Previous Records.

"CHINSTRAP" OFFERS AN EXPLANATION.

According to a recent Army return, the number of deserters in 1911 was greater than that in any of the preceding nine years. The total number of men thus lost to the Army during the past twelve months was something over 1,600, nearly 400 more than in 1910.

This represents a considerable money loss to the public. The soldier's value in £ s. d. may be estimated on the basis that a recruit may purchase his discharge within three months of enlistment on payment of £10; after that period he is reckoned to be worth £18 to the nation—that is, as a private, for his value increases with his rank.

By value I do not mean so much his efficiency as what he has cost in the way of uniform, training, etc.

A large proportion of these 1,600 deserters were £10 men, but if we average the lot at £14 apiece we get a loss to the country of £22,400.

DESERTING TO RE-ENLIST.

No doubt the Army was well and cheaply rid of many of these "King's bad bargains." Moreover, some of them probably deserted only to re-enlist in some other regiment.

There is a peculiar type of Tommy—every Army man knows him—who is a first-rate soldier, but cursed with an incurable restlessness. He will serve well and faithfully for a couple of years or so, when he deserts to another regiment.

This does not necessarily mean that he is "fed up" with his own corps. Desertion is a sort of hobby with him. I knew one old ruffian who possessed the belt buckles and badges of seven different regiments, in six of which he had enlisted illegally.

This type of deserter's new regiment may strongly suspect him for what he is, but they are usually content not to make inconvenient inquiries, knowing that for a year or two they will have the services of a thoroughly efficient soldier. Still, he is an expensive luxury, for he usually makes away with his kit before vamoosing.

BETTER CONDITIONS OF SERVICE.

However, apart from regular "bad hats" and systematic deserters, probably a large number of these 1,600 renegades were lads who could have been made into good soldiers, and they represent a dead and serious loss to the country.

The prevalence of desertion clearly points to something wrong somewhere, and yet it is by no means easy to lay one's finger on the weak spot.

The soldier's pay has been slightly improved, his victualling very much so, and if there are still barracks that are simply piggish, barrack accommodation on the whole has been bettered.

Taking it all round, the soldier of to-day lives like a lord compared with Tommy Atkins of twenty years ago. Yet desertion is increasing.

Of course, many recruits enlist because they are hungry or in trouble of some kind, and desert as soon as their bellies have been filled or the storm has blown over. This, however, has always been the case, and does not account for increasing desertions.

FAULT OF THE DEPOT SYSTEM.

The depôt system undoubtedly breeds deserters. The average depôt, where the recruit undergoes his preliminary training before being drafted to his regiment, is a deadly dull place. There is no band, nothing of the pomp and glitter of Army life, and the lad who has been stirred by the sight of a regiment on the march, drums beating, colours flying, joins the depôt only to weary of its drabness and to cut his lucky at the first opportunity.

Then the families of many recruits live near the depôt. The lad perhaps has enlisted against their wishes, and when he visits them on pass the opposition is continued, and he is encouraged and helped to desert.

Probably desertion would be greatly decreased if recruits could be sent straight to their regiments, but perhaps this is scarcely feasible.

In any case the defects of the depôt system are no new cause of youthful desertion.

MOLLY-CODDLED RECRUITS.

On the other hand recruits are much better cared for at depôts than formerly. Indeed, compared with the old days, they are absolutely molly-coddled.

Here, I think, we approach the root of the matter. I believe that the real cause of our increasing desertion is our system of free education.

My friend, Mr. Eugene Corri, has a theory that the dearth of first-class English boxers, more particularly heavyweights, is due to the same cause.

The Street Arab of former days had to fight like a tiger for existence. He was always scrapping, and when he survived and came to manhood he had that strength and toughness, that indomitable pluck and capacity for taking punishment, and that practical craft and knowledge, born of hard experience, that are the foundation of a great boxer.

To-day the Street Arab is coralled into a school, where the master who dares to lay a finger on him will probably be summoned for assault.

FIGHTING NOT ENCOURAGED.

At some municipal schools, I believe, boxing is taught and encouraged, but in the great majority it is not. Rather is the boy taught to regard boxing as brutal and degrading, and "milling" with other boys is forbidden.

That physical development is not fostered in our "Board" schools is seen by the fact that the most frequent cause of rejection of Army recruits is "under chest measurement."

I do not wish in any way to sneer at the State-educated boy because I happen to have been to a public school—I sincerely hope I should not be such a snob—and I am not suggesting that the youth of the nation should be left to roam the streets uncared for and uneducated. But I think it is fair to say that the State school-boy suffers from want of wholesome discipline, and that too much attention is devoted to stuffing his head with more or less useless knowledge, too little to developing physique and "character."

Anyway, be Mr. Corri's theory in regard to boxing correct or not, it is certain that the raw recruit to-day is often a soft, undisciplined, insubordinate scallywag.

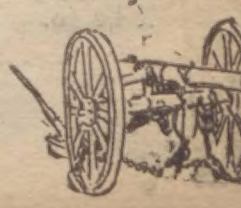
LACK OF DISCIPLINE.

Were he sent straight to his regiment he would soon have the nonsense knocked out of him, but at the depôt he is coddled. The sergeant-instructor who gave a cheeky recruit a hiding—ever so much better than running him in—would probably lose his stripes.

But even for the tenderly-treated recruit there are disagreeables—early morning parade, and so on. Then sooner or later he probably gets himself reported—in the old days he'd have had a taste of belt and no more said—for cheeking a non-com., and his pass is stopped. This, or any little restraint or irksomeness, is quite enough to make him desert, for as a boy he has never been disciplined and taught to keep a stiff upper lip.

If there be anything in my ideas on this subject—and I cordially invite criticism from military readers—then the prevalence of deserters, more particularly youthful ones, is a serious matter not only in itself and its cost to the country, but as pointing to a rising generation the members of which, to put it mildly, are not conspicuous for manly qualities.

"CHINSTRAP."



SPORT AS A SOCIAL LEVER.

HOW IT IS USED BY THE NOUVEAU RICHE.

Sport is infested with *nouveaux riches*, who use it as a means of social advancement.

This is sad but practically inevitable. The cost of racing, shooting, salmon fishing, and so on has increased so enormously that only very rich men can afford to keep a racing stable or to own or lease shoots or salmon rivers.

On the other hand, Society is full of high-born but impecunious men and women who are ready enough to accept the *nouveau riche's* sporting hospitality while sneering at him behind his back. An unpleasant picture, but unfortunately true.

Of course, the man who has made his money in business or trade may be a good fellow and a good sportsman, but none the less he usually buys his way into Society, and his shortest route is viâ sport.

The Turf, in particular, offers great opportunities to the socially ambitious self-made man. There is a great freemasonry about the Turf, and the man who owns some useful horses can easily make the acquaintance of the great ones of the earth.

RACING AND SOCIETY.

Sometimes, of course, he may be badly snubbed—the owner of the Derby winner, for example, is *not* always invited to dine with the King—but unless a person is very "hopeless," success on the Turf will open doors to him that would otherwise be for ever closed.

Racing history affords many examples of humbly-born men being made free of Society simply because of their Turf triumphs, though in these cases it must be remembered that they were generally good chaps to boot.

The *nouveau riche* owner does not necessarily make for evil. He usually runs his horses straight, not probably from any particular morality, but simply because in this case honesty is the best policy.

On the other hand, he often has no real interest in racing. His horses are to him simply machines, bought to win as soon as possible. A modern "classic" race is too frequently a contest of money-bags. The *nouveau riche* has no time to waste on breeding; if a race can practically be bought by weight of money, he buys it.

COUNTRY HOUSE PARTIES.

Human nature is human nature. You may dislike a man, think him beneath you, but if he can give you the very best shooting or fishing in the country, you are apt to discover in him good qualities which would otherwise be invisible to you.

The modern sporting house-party usually consists of a plutocratic host, who doesn't know one end of a gun or rod from another, and a collection of well-born cadgers.

This does not make for sport. Midas stocks his moors, his coverts, his rivers until even the veriest of duffers could hardly fail to secure a good bag or basket.

The sporting sense of the men who accept his hospitality becomes atrophied. They accept the sporting gifts that the moneyed gods give them, and become content to have their sport ready made for them, to think of nothing but a big bag.

BUYING A MEET.

County society is highly exclusive, but the *nouveau riche* can find a way in. He does so through hunting. There are not many M.F.H.'s in a position to return a thousand-guinea cheque, coupled with a handsome annual subscription, and so Midas "buys" a meet at his mansion, and the doors of county society are open to him.

Motoring has helped many rich bounders into Society. A man who owns luxurious motor-cars, and is prepared to place them at your disposal, is an acquaintance worth cultivating.

Golf has its uses as a social lever. The *nouveau riche* has a first-class private course laid out for the use of himself and his guests, and this is often a very tempting bait.

There is scarcely a sport which cannot be used as a means of climbing the social ladder, and there is only one that is proof against the power of Midas's money-bags. This is yachting. At least, this is true so far as membership of the Royal Yacht Squadron is concerned, for, of course, the possession of a fine steam or sailing yacht will bring a man many Society "friends." But all the gold in the world would not buy admission to the R.Y.S., and long may it be so.

R. B. Humphreys.

THE SPEY CAST.

The Spey cast is greatly favoured by salmon-fishers who want to get a long line.

Stand with your back to a strong wind, and, having some fifteen yards of line out, raise the rod straight up until nearly all the line is out of the water.

Then sweep the point forward and down, and the wind will take the line out, the fly travelling last but arriving first. This is something like the Spey cast, but only an imitation.

The experienced angler needs no wind to help him. By making the rod describe a sort of curve in the air he makes the line hit the water two or three yards away—that is, a part of the line near the rod—and then the rest of the line unrolls itself in snake-like rings across the water, the fly finally dropping as light as a feather. It is unbelievable how the line will fly out until you have seen it done.

SCHOOLS FOR SHOOTING.

Just as the man who wants to take up riding can go to a riding-school, so is the would-be game or pigeon shot enabled nowadays to acquire proficiency by means of a distinctly modern introduction, the shooting-school.

These have been started by some of the more enterprising gun-makers, and there are several such establishments round London, and not a few in the provinces. Here you will find extensive grounds artistically laid out in imitation of the surroundings of the different varieties of game; and the clay bird is the chief medium of instruction.

These are shot mechanically out of traps at all manner of angles, rates of speed, and intervals of time, so that the novice, or the man whose shooting has "gone a bit rusty," has every opportunity of acquiring or regaining that *sine quâ non* of the successful shot, ability to bring the gun up quickly.

The cost of instruction varies with each school, and also, doubtless, according to the number of clay birds thrown up and cartridges used; but two or three guineas should suffice to put even a novice on the road to a fair proficiency as a shot.

There is, of course, a world of difference between game-shooting and rifle-shooting.

CURRENT BOXING.

NOTES AND CRITICISMS.

It is said that the National Sporting Club of America has put up 16,000 dollars (about £3,200) for a match between Matt Wells and Packey McFarland. It is also said that the men have accepted, in which case it will be a great bout, as the two are probably the best of their class in the game just now.

Here are some of the treats that Mr. "Peggy" Bettinson is said to have in view for the members of the National Sporting Club. Some of them will be worth going a long way to see: Arthur Evernden v. Sid Burns, Digger Stanley v. Charles Ledoux, Johnny Hughes v. Sid Smith, Jim Driscoll v. Jean Poesy, Jack Harrison v. Jim Sullivan, and last, but most decidedly not least, Harry Lewis v. Georges Carpentier.

By the way, Arthur Evernden has got beaten in Paris by a French boxer named Bernard. He lost the verdict on points after fifteen gruelling rounds; but a great many excellent judges (French as well as British) were of opinion that the decision should have been the other way about.

Yet another Gallic boxer is after Digger Stanley's scalp. His name is Gaillard, and as he has beaten Ledoux, who, you will remember, beat Joe Bowker at the N.S.C. not long ago, he ought to have quite a good chance. Anyhow, if anything *is* fixed up between Gaillard and Stanley, we shall get a good line to go on after the meeting between the latter and Ledoux, on the Monday night before Derby Day.

At a recent "exhibition," given under the auspices of the Irish Guards, a "clever display" was given by Master Eugene Corri (son of the famous referee) and Master H. Cooney. Nobody has a greater regard than I for Mr. Corri as a man and a sportsman, but I wish he would not let his kiddie show off his paces in public just yet. Fulsome praise, which, as the son of his father, young 'Gene is sure to get, has a demoralising effect on the youthful mind, and this policy *may* mean the future spoiling of a really very promising young boxer.

"Straight Left."

BOBBY CO-PARTNERS' RIVAL.

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

By JOHN HILARY GARRATT.

The whole thing started when Cleckitter's, the grocers, changed their carter.

Their old employee had been despised of Bobby Co-partners, and even the Westfields, or hard-up, district of Kenchester, used to peer its shock head out of its many doorways, and addressed to him the pointed query, "When are they goin' to burn ye?" an unfit state for association with a high-nosed and cleanly world being implied.

Young Cleckitter impressed on Tommy Jickerson, who, of some thirty applicants, was selected to fill the breach, that smartness was the thing. It led to more business. It was a testimonial to your firm.

One would almost wager that, swearing him to secrecy, either by fear of the sack, or *esprit de corps*, this young Cleckitter concluded his remarks with "Take the Co-partners' man for an example."

Events tended to prove the truth of this supposition.

There is a strangely-puffed Bobby Co-partners for you to observe.

The day that Tommy Jickerson came out with his horse's mane hogged *à la* the style of Bobby's famous Andrew, sent Bobby home a little pleased and wondering if it were mere coincidence.

When the metal parts of the Cleckitter man's harness were robbed of their coat of verdigris and reflected back the sun, Bobby was more certain.

But the adorning red leather rosettes that found a place above the blinkers of the Cleckitter horse finally proved it. Imitation, as all the world knows, is the sincerest form of flattery.

Behold Bobby Co-partners had been imitated!

Down Westgate Street, which, similarly as Morrison Street in Pekin is thus designated because the "Times" correspondent of that name lives there, was impressed on Bobby's heart as Mary Meadows Street for reasons that run on similar lines, all the inhabitants saw, and commented upon the matter.

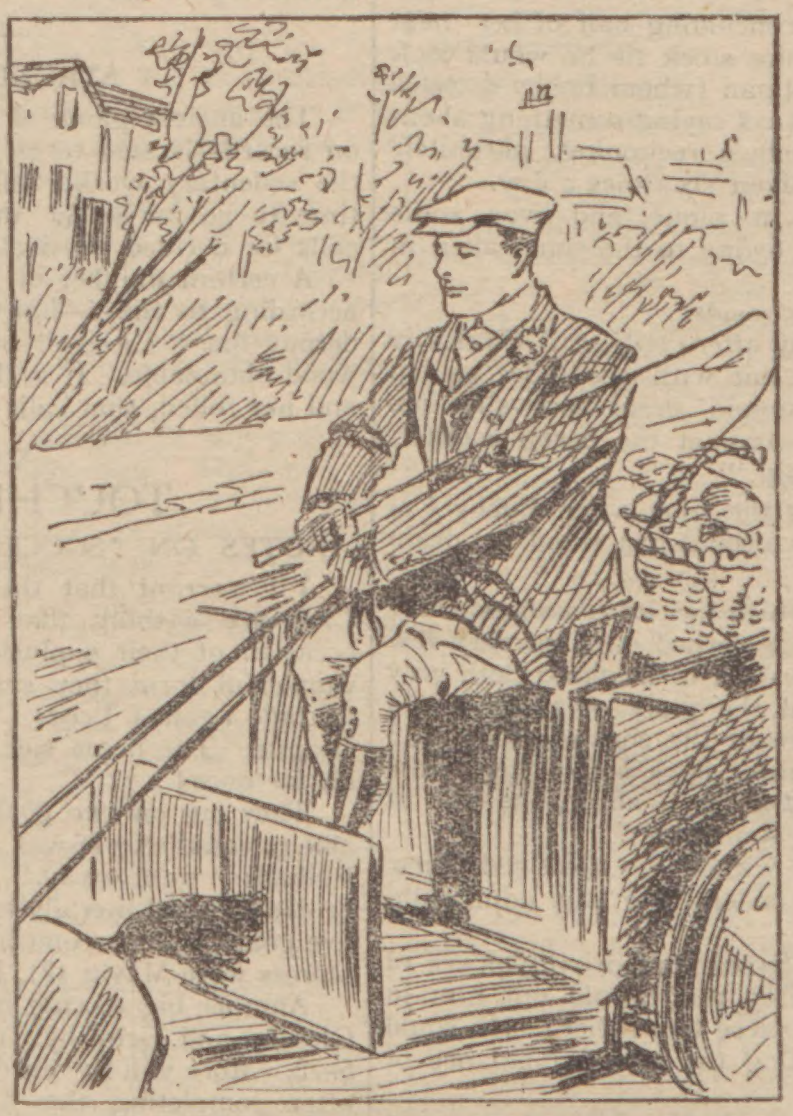
And Bobby, rather bigotedly convinced that his was the one tradesman's turn-out in the town that was allowed to look smart, was suitably, if a little happily, indignant.

"Anyway," he said, "Cleckitter's has got no bloomin' brains of his own, or he wouldn't go suckin' another chap's brains."

Cleckitter's, of course, implies Tommy Jickerson, and—alas! that there are other girls than Mary Meadows in Mary Meadows Street—Bobby's coxcombish comment got round to Cleckitter's. Announcing the fact to every customer, Cleckitter's threw down the gauntlet verbally. News of it was eagerly passed along the Street by every daughter of the house whose standard of beauty was not high enough to gain daily the "extra special" salute of Bobby Co-partners' whip.

In Westgate Street the grades of his salute had long been recognised among the femininity thereof, and an absent-minded, careless raising of Bobby's whip in the "quite ordinary" style has been known to make Suffragettes of more than one otherwise right-thinking girl.

Bobby, whose cart was always round at the same time, wondered rather how Cleckitter's would recognise those who were destined to become of the Cleckitter's faction.



Bobby Co-partners had the pair of gloves, with the compliments of a few "sincere well-wishers," in time to outshine the gloveless Tommy.

He produced a brand new flourish inside the very first week. Perhaps it did not beat Bobby's for an implication of sincere and sunny regard, but undoubtedly it was more "classy," as the Street had it.

There is no doubt that Bobby drove back to the stores that day telling himself that, of course, his method was far in advance of Cleckitter's, and laughing at his rival's "cabby fashion," but feeling all the time that the "class" would weigh rather with Westgate Street, and that really the slow and dignified manner in which young Jickerson brought his whip across to his driving hand at an angle, was a faultless reproduction of the style affected by the lordly persons who drove carriage people.

That night he spent some time on his harness and gave the cart such a doing that he took almost as much time over each spoke as usually he spent over each wheel.

He drove out the next morning with a feeling of elation. No amount of sluicing or rubbing could make the neglected turn-out of Messrs. Cleckitter and Son look anything to dazzle the sun.

In the Street, his triumph was complete. It lasted from that Tuesday to the following week.

An enigmatic-looking Tommy, after a hopeless attempt to produce the same results with his cart, fell back on Cleckitter and Son's reserve vehicle, a ponderous, if better preserved, old van.

Bobby rejoiced, and applied more polish to the hubs of his cart, to debase his rival the more.

That was on the sixth day of his triumph.

The next day the gold went out of the sunbeams for Bobby Co-partners; even the smile of Mary Meadows afforded him but the things-that-might-have-been feeling.

For Cleckitter's, it is galling to set down, had the old cart out with him again, gleaming in the pride of fresh paint—"good as new" from Kenchester's best coach-builders!

Fresh from a livery stable, that wretched Cleckitter's, too, had some trick of the trade with the harness that beat all the compositions Bobby could lay his hands on, and all the elbow grease he could apply to it.

"But he spent all his time in the harness-room," groaned Bobby.

And to the end of gaining that knowledge that put Tommy in front, he hung about every mews in the town, not daring to ask plainly what he wanted to know, for, truth to tell, Mr. Bobby Co-partners had carried his chin rather high when, in the past, he had driven by the strongholds of the professional element. He had been rather conscious, owing to the way he groomed his horse, that he was a slightly superior person.

A tale of the abasement of vanity such as this is, of anyone except Bobby Co-partners, it would have to be recorded that in some rather underhand way he got the required information by ignominiously asking for it from some hanger-on at the mews. It would have been easy enough, twopence would have done it, but the streak of dignity in Bobby Co-partners would not have allowed him to gain the information by asking for it, even if with the professional wrinkle they had handed him untold gold.

And from his own reconnoitering no idea of the disposition of the winning factor in the enemy's forces was gained.

There was still the freshly painted cart, the wise reader will reason, as well as the matter of the harness. The wisest readers of all, however, will have seen that Bobby Co-partners ere the sun set on Cleckitter's triumphant day, petitioned the manager to have his vehicle done up also.

He had won his point and to revenge himself on someone

for the glory Tommy Jickerson enjoyed while he, perforce, had to swelter in mortification in one of the company's old carts, had worried the coach-builders every day to get the job finished.

But it was only "honours even" when he reappeared in the Street. Each drove brilliant examples of the coach-builders' redecorative art. Set off against the superiority of Andrew's coat and condition, was the matter of Tommy's harness.

But for the first time in his life that night the ever-resourceful Bobby, having struck an idea, gazed at himself in the glass for ten minutes on end.

By his side he had on approval a box of selected and "very hossy" stocks. Mary Meadows that day had been so foolish as to point out that he looked a handsomer man than his rival.

Into such a deduction had Bobby's hope and ambition idealised remarks no more considerable than, "No, Bobby, you ain't goin' to get me to say he's right down ugly, but, anyway, you're a bit more the gentleman than him in the way you set yourself up."

Bobby tried to blot out the concluding half of her next observation that if he wore a nice stock tie he would look A1—*quite* up to the Mayor's footman (whom Bobby detested because Mary Meadows was always saying something about him). And the beast, to Bobby's reckoning, absolutely poured pints of oil on his hair about six times a day.

He selected a nice pattern in piqué, and was some minutes late the next morning, owing to the time taken in tying it satisfactorily.

His own words must give the result.

"Hang me," he said the day afterwards, "if Cleckitter didn't have the sauce to come out with one twice as big this mornin'. And he had a lumpin' great horse-shoe pin—borrowed from the first salesman at the bacon counter, I'll bet a million—into the bargain."

Luckily, it was approaching the time when Bobby Co-partners' funds in the Post Office could just stand the drain of an addition to his wardrobe.

In the history of tailoring, which has its romances, there have been some wonderful things turned out, but very few to beat Mr. Bobby Co-partners' West of England cloth grey driving coat and breeches, and the glory of them would have been beyond the effulgence of the constellations, had it not been for the fact that three days before they were finished Cleckitter came out in a check affair, the like of which never was seen before in Kenchester.

For weeks Tommy had gone without his nicotined necessities of life to pay for that wonder. He was admittedly broke now.

Almost weeping, Bobby confessed that driving-gloves of the smartest were the only thing that would put him in front, and he had not a penny-piece left either! He could buy them after carefully hoarding the spending-balance of two Saturdays' pay—

"But so can Cleckitter," said Mary Meadows, and whisked him away.

She did it through her mother, of course—even the pro-Bobby Co-partners' faction, comprising, alas! many anti-Mary-Meadowses (for obvious reasons, Mary would not herself seek to enthuse with the project).

The money was raised among the matrons, and in pennies, along half the Street.

Bobby Co-partners' birthday providentially turning up at the psychological moment, he had the pair of gloves with the compliments of a few "sincere well-wishers," in time to outshine the gloveless Tommy.

But the anti-Mary-Meadowses communicated a hint of it, it is to be feared, to the pro-Cleckitters.

The following day they added to the pair of gloves they sent him, a gay cerise favour for Tommy's whip! And when, in desperation, Bobby recorded a levelling-up point with the blue and yellow ribbons of the Rothschilds (as affected by all the London hansoms at Christmas, and, thus, highly sporting and fashionable), a Power from the outer world stepped in and wiped it all out, finished the competition, tumbled over both the heroes, and—just made them the firmest friends in the length and breadth of England!

That power was the "good customer" of the wealthier parts of Kenchester.

That person, whose name must only be breathed in fitting reverence, put it diffidently to the managers of both the Co-partners' Stores, Limited, and to Messrs. Cleckitter and Son.

He pointed out that, while being served by young men who might have come straight from a circle of hunting county people rather raised the tone of the transaction of buying marmalade and baking-powder, it was uncomfortable to feel less smartly dressed (a sorrowful circumstance of the times, my dear sir) than the man who took off his gloves (!) to book one's order.

It came to pass that the rivals, shorn of their personal adornments, and flushed still under the gall of their managers' remarks on over-ostentation, met in Westgate Street.

Bobby sighed a little.

"I've to confine my energies to the horse and cart," he said.

"You've had it, then, same as me," said Cleckitter, in sympathy.

Both clutched at the remnant of their byegone glories.

"For a long time," said Cleckitter, "I've wondered how you got your horse in such fettle."

"Come round to the stables to-night," said Bobby Co-partners. "And—here—you might tell us how you get your harness up so natty."

STRENUOUS SKITTLES.

The ancient game of skittles—probably the oldest game on record—is said to be going to "boom" this year, and the sedentary worker of athletic inclinations who has no time to go far afield might do worse than try it, for it calls for decided physical strength.

A certain number of large and heavy "pins"—varying according to codes—has to be knocked down with a ponderous flat "cheese," made of the toughest and heaviest wood obtainable. It is the fact that this has to be thrown, and *not* rolled, that calls for muscular power.

TOUCHLINE TOPICS.

NOTES ON "SOCCER" AND ITS BIG PLAYERS.

I'll warrant that the officials of the Fulham Football Club are wishing that the team had displayed, on the occasion of their explusion from the Cup competition, the wonderful form they showed in their match at Craven Cottage against Leeds City, in the Second Division of the League. The home side certainly had their shooting boots on for once!

They put on two goals before half-time, but Leeds were able to equalise. It was, however, after the resumption that Fulham "went away." Their forwards simply would be denied; and literally banged away, scoring no fewer than five goals in the second half, winning by seven to two! The scorers were Mavin (2), Pearce (3), and Coleman (2).

Another big scoring match was that at Glossop between Glossop and Grimsby Town, when the home side won by 5—2. More will be heard of Moore, the Glossop player, who after completing the "hat trick," just after half-time, eventually made himself responsible for four of his side's five points.

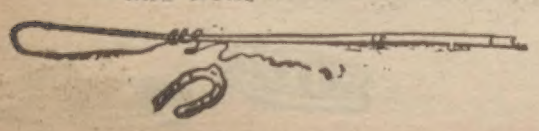
There were two big "benefit" matches in the First Division. One was the Sunderland-Woolwich Arsenal fixture, at Sunderland, which was set aside for Tait, the Sunderland half-back. Unlucky, as usual, the Arsenal went under by 1—0. Their forwards did a lot of shooting, but they were not quite clever enough to beat the Sunderland goalkeeper, who played a great game. If Woolwich would only see to it that their forwards were as good in front of goal as in other departments of the game, they would enjoy better "luck," and be higher than fourteenth place on the League table.

The second "benefit" was at Nottingham, between Notts County and Newcastle United. The beneficiary in this case was Iremonger, the home custodian. There was a sensation in the early stages, Notts scoring within a minute of the start. But, alas! they scored no more, and, putting on no less than four goals, Newcastle ran out easy winners.

It is seldom that two clubs have so very similar a record as have Leyton and New Brompton, who figure at the bottom of the Southern League table. Look at this, their respective positions at the time of writing:

	P.	W.	L.	D.	Goals. F.	A.	P.
Leyton	30	5	17	8	22	56	18
New Brompton	30	5	17	8	23	67	18

It will be seen that it is only by virtue of "goal average" that Leyton takes pride of place.



SWINDLES

A CRIMINAL'S REVELATIONS. By WORMWOOD PORTLAND.

12.—SHOP LIFTING ON IMPROVED PRINCIPLES.

[*We desire it to be thoroughly understood that the names of all the people mentioned in these articles are fictitious. Where reference is made to men and women still alive, any indication as to their actual identity has been removed from the manuscript.*—EDITOR.]

Although the telephone is still a useful agency of fraud, it isn't what it was in the early days of its general adoption, before people had tumbled to the ease with which it could be employed for criminal purposes. It is still a valuable means in the service of a really capable swindler, but one that he has to avail himself of nowadays with much greater discrimination than was formerly necessary.

I haven't used it myself for years—I believe the last time I did so was to recommend myself for that clerkship at the bucket-shop, where I "swindled a swindler." It is thinking of that exciting experience that reminds me of another in which the telephone figured.

Turning over my personal effects one morning to see whether I could find anything on which I could raise a bit to go on with, I picked up a few ridiculous articles of Brummagem jewellery. I couldn't remember for what purpose I had ever bought such things, but was quite sure that I had never so prostituted my talents as to pinch the rubbish.

VANITY.

But I laid aside, rubbed up, and put in my pocket a necklet of glass beads and two brass rings. The three together, so far as their intrinsic value was concerned, were not worth stooping to the gutter for—yet I was going to make £20 out of them before the day was over, and that without parting with them.

As usual, I can proudly say, "Alone I did it." To do me justice for my ingenuity and the other qualities I brought into play in pulling off this little job, and to give fair credit to the means I employed, put yourself in my place. Imagine yourself without a stiver, *in esse* or *in posse*, at ten o'clock in the morning, and £20 to be got within six hours—work, accident and coincidence all barred.

Now then, how are you going to do it? When you have realised that you couldn't have done it at all, you'll be all the more interested in knowing how *I* did it.

SELECTING A SHOP.

The sham jewellery I took out with me naturally turned my thoughts to genuine jewellery, and as there are no better jewellers in all London than in Bond Street—New or Old—I strolled from one end to the other of that busy and fashionable thoroughfare. My choice fell on a resplendent establishment about half-way between Oxford Street and Piccadilly, kept at the time I am writing by one Spinnotti.

Having decided that out of Spinnotti I would diddle what I wanted, I walked as far as the Marble Arch, wondering where, how, and from whom I was going to raise twopence for a telephone call. Turning into the Tube station, I hung around for nearly an hour before my chance arrived in the person of an old woman who, I could see at a glance, wasn't used to finding her own way about town. With a courteous little bow I stopped her just as she was making straight for the right ticket office for the City, and inquired where she wanted to go. She was a nice old lady, and started to tell me at once not only where she wanted to go, but why she wanted to go there, and where she came from.

A MEAN THEFT.

I noticed that she was clutching two coppers in her right hand, in readiness to pay her fare to the Bank, and when she got to the Bank would I tell her how to get to Fenchurch Street?

The Bank? Fenchurch Street? Why, I was going to both myself, and should be so happy to put her right—though I, too, was rather a stranger in London. We should have to go down by one of the lifts near by which we were standing, and they'd just told me at the ticket-office that we were in the wrong part of the station to book for the City—the proper window was round the corner.

"You stay where you are, mother—I'll take the tickets for both of us—but there's not a moment to lose. Don't move away from here, or we shall miss the train,"—and I was off with the necessary two pennies to ring up Spinnotti with. I really don't know whether she gave them to me or whether I took them out of her flustered old hand—it was somewhere about half and half, but, any way, I'd got them, and almost as easily as winking.

A propos the fact that I reached Edgware road by a circuitous route, I tender the philosophical remark that no inexperienced crooks and very few experienced ones ever go straight from the scene of a crime if they can go zig-zag. There's some blind, unreasoning instinct that impels them to hide, to evade, to "escape when no man pursueth." If the devil can quote Scripture when it suits his purpose, why shouldn't I? I was red-ripe with experience, but I made for a telephone office by way of slums and back-streets, after pinching that poor old girl's twopence. I really felt sorry for her, and don't mind saying so. We all have our weak moments.

THE CALL-OFFICE BOX.

"Are you there?"

"Yes," replied Spinnotti. "Who is speaking, please?"

"Inspector Box," I told him—"New Scotland Yard. A woman shop-lifter was arrested in Regent Street about an hour ago and she's given away a man who's been working with her. You're likely to have a call from him some time to-day, if what she says is true; so you'd better take a note of his description, and be on the lookout for him. If he comes in and you identify him, watch him all the time, but let him go the whole hog, then detain him, and call in a constable."

Spinnotti's agitation was betrayed by his voice.

"We don't like such cases," he urged. "They don't do us any good—besides, the waste of time and money in prosecuting. We've had several such cases, and they've always cost us a good bit, one way and another; and I positively hate the notoriety. But I'm very much obliged to you, Inspector, of course, for the warning; and if you drop in I shall be glad to see you. What's this man like?"

DESCRIBING HIMSELF.

"He's described to us as" . . . and I gave a few points for the identification of the coming visitor, being careful not to know too much about him, and cautioning the jeweller that he must be on his guard not only to protect his goods against theft but himself against mortally offending a possibly innocent customer.

"When you think you've spotted your man you *must* let him commit himself," I concluded. "A shoplifter isn't a shoplifter till he's lifted something," I represented oracularly; and as I rang off felt quite satisfied that my object had been achieved; I should be suspected at sight and my every movement watched.

I don't claim any praise for the easy self-confidence with which, at two o'clock, I entered the shop, for the swindle I was now on involved me in no danger. If my scheme failed—and this I could make almost impossible—I should simply have to walk out of the place.

COURTING DETECTION.

Spinnotti (there was no mistaking which of the three men behind the counter was the proprietor) not only "recognised" me at once from Inspector Box's description, but showed that he "recognised" me. His pale, nervous face flushed, and meaning glances passed between him and his two assistants.

One of the latter advanced to serve me; the other turned his back and pretended to be busy on the works of the watch, but I twigged that he was facing a little oval mirror that reflected the part of the counter at which I stood, opposite to where the first chap had halted, and awaited my pleasure; Spinnotti came round into the shop itself to watch me from behind. It had all been arranged, and perhaps rehearsed, in anticipation of my arrival.

Now I had come—and the fun began.

"I should like to look at a few things in the way of diamond necklaces," I said blandly, and some half a dozen cases were promptly placed in front of me. One by one I examined their contents, and then asked to see a few more, and after that a few more still. Presently quite a number of uncased necklaces were lying in a glittering heap on my

side of the counter. On one of them I got my fingers, and twiddled it up the sleeve of my coat.

I was certain that they all three saw me do it. Good.

The next moment I was afraid that none of the necklets would quite suit. The only ones that would pair with what I wanted to match were priced at a higher figure than I cared to go to. I would like to look at a few ladies' rings.

I thought the man hesitated, as though waiting for a signal from Spinnotti. It didn't come, so he produced a great tray of costly rings. I got a lot of them muddled up, and slipped one into my waistcoat pocket, having previously—and clumsily—dropped the necklace from up my sleeve into my trousers pocket.

I was sorry to be so hard to please, but I really thought I'd rather buy a man's ring.

"Step this way, sir," said Mr. Spinnotti, moving to my side, "if you'll be so kind. At this time in the afternoon there's a better light in my little private office here"—and he opened the door of a room adjoining the shop. "Mr. Morris, you will follow us, please."

OFF FOR THE POLICE.

"Yes, sir," responded the man who had been serving me. The other shopman turned round to take charge of the counter with its scattered array as Morris moved from it. The door of the inner room closed on Spinnotti and myself. All had gone splendidly—Morris would be back directly with a policeman.

The jeweller didn't wait for the arrival of the representative of the Law before he accused me. He even promised not to charge me, offered to let me go free, if I would quietly hand him over the property I had stolen from him. I had a diamond necklet in one pocket and a gold ring in another.

Bar the adjectives, the assertion was quite true. In fact, I had two rings and a necklet—the trumpery things of brass and glass I had carried into the shop with me. The glass necklet I dropped from my sleeve among the diamond ones on the counter before I wriggled it back again. The brass ring which I picked from among the gold ones I put among them first.

What did I care how soon a constable was brought in?

BLUSTER AND BLUFF.

In the meantime I stormed and raved, and "moved to exit," as old stage directions used to put it. Spinnotti called his man in from the shop, and together they barred my way. Technically, they assaulted me.

At the police-station I was searched—and my accuser was asked to identify the only articles of "jewellery" found on me. He stammered out his yarn about Inspector Box—only to be told by the Sergeant on duty that there was no Inspector Box in the London force.

His discomfiture was complete when Morris rushed in, breathlessly, to report that stock was intact.

The last scene was in the little "private office" again, adjoining the shop. My part was easier to play than ever.

"Accept your profound apologies, sir? Apologies for a baseless accusation; assault and battery; personal indignity and false imprisonment! Never, sir. My solicitors will receive instructions to act at once. My action against you shall be reported in every paper. Damn your apologies!"

"I'll put them in writing," offered Spinnotti, opening his cheque-book.

"Take them out of the till," I said. "Twenty of them, in sovereigns——" and at that I let him off.

[*Another of these revelations will appear next week.*—Editor.]

TWO GOOD GARDEN TIPS.

Many a keen gardener of moderate means envies his richer neighbour the latter's imposing collection of French glass "cloches," for keeping cuttings close after insertion. Here, however, is a useful substitute. Simply place an ordinary gas globe of plain glass over your cuttings, and put another flat piece of glass—say, a bit of an old broken window-pane—over the narrow opening at the top.

Here is a tip if your hose leaks. Cut the hose right in two at the spot where the leak is. Then take a piece of bamboo about 3in. long and of a diameter of a size to fit just comfortably into your hose. Clear all the pith out of the bamboo so as to make a tube, but taking care not to crack the wood. Then all you have to do is to join your two sections of the hose over the bamboo tube thus made and bind them tightly over the join with copper wire.

MY NOTEBOOK.

DESERTERS. I would draw your attention in particular this week to "Chinstrap's" article on deserters. As a military expert, he has an interesting explanation to offer of the fact that the official particulars, just issued for the year 1911, show that there were over 1,600 deserters from the Army during the twelvemonth in question.

Whether or not his explanation be the right one, it will be interesting to know if the opinions of our Army readers correspond with his.

The deserter from the Regulars is, I imagine, something like the slacker in the Territorials. He is the type of man—and you find him in the ante-room as well as in the canteen—who spends his leisure asking himself, his friends, and the empty air what in all the world possessed him to join the force. Sometimes he is nothing more than a grouser, and more unhappy than ever if, in a moment of exasperation, he actually does put his threat into action and resigns or gets his discharge.

You find the same sort of thing in the commercial world also, where the man who is always in his own estimation injured is known in every office and in every workshop.

AN APPLICANT FOR A JOB. Talking of commercial matters, I am reminded of a letter which I have just received from a reader. He informs me that he finds himself out of a job, not through any fault of his own, but owing to a reduction of staff on the part of the firm. He asks me whether I could put him in the way of obtaining a new situation, and informs me that he "would not object to coming to London to work, but would prefer a situation in his own town."

"Not object" is a good phrase, sufficiently indicative of the rest of the letter. A man who is worth his salt would be prepared to go to London or anywhere else for a good job, if he were out of a billet, and to go there eagerly, and not with the negative compliance suggested in "not objecting."

This correspondent's application is also damned by the fact that his writing is almost indecipherable. Not only is the caligraphy characterless, but it is so careless that one finds it difficult to guess his meaning.

COMMERCIAL SLACKNESS. I mention this letter, because it is illustrative of the spirit of the commercial world to-day. This correspondent will, if fate is kind to him, be out of a situation for a considerable time. He will then have his character remodelled to some extent, and he will start upon his new job not only without objecting, but with eagerness. He will also probably have looked about for defects, and will have struck upon his handwriting as one and will have bettered it.

In running my own business I have, of course, on many occasions had to engage new people, and some of the letters I have received would not be credited by anyone who had not had a similar experience. Many of them are illiterate, and the applicants frankly admit that they have not the qualifications which were definitely stated as required in your advertisement, but others are foolish enough actually to mislead you.

For example, you advertise for a junior clerk and stipulate that he must be under a certain age. You will receive several applications from men who are much older than that, and some of them who do not state the fact will even secure an interview with you, when you discover that, far from being the youngster you want to fill the post, he is a bearded man. You do not like to tell him that his age rules him out, but you do feel an inclination to protest against his wasting your time when you definitely stipulated for someone younger.

Even when a man has secured a job, it is seldom that he continues in it in the right spirit. A week after his engagement his job becomes his birthright, and his salary an annuity. The less he can do the better he is pleased. That, alas! is the feeling among too many Englishmen in the commercial world to-day, and it may, to some extent, explain why so many positions of importance are occupied by Scotsmen, Jews, and foreigners. The Englishman is a capital chap, but he is not always a good commercial machine.

Your Editor.

Westinghouse Building, Strand, London.

SALVATION.

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

By ADAM STERN.

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In a cheaply-furnished bed-sitting room a youngish, clean-shaven man with a pale, lined face, and a lifeless expression, was seated at a table writing by the light of a lamp.

It was a rough night outside. The rain pattered against the panes, and a violent wind was shrieking to and fro, as if in search of an enemy to tear in pieces.

Notwithstanding this, before long the sound of feet on the staircase roused the writer from the absorption of his task. He turned his head and looked at the door with a puzzled contraction of brow. No person save the landlady ever came into the room—and more than one person was ascending the stairs.

He laid down his pen and gripped the edge of the table hard as the door was perfunctorily knocked and opened, and his landlady spoke.

"That's his room, sir."

And a man came in.

He was a rakish-looking individual, with a hat a little on one side, shiny with the rain, and his coat-collar turned up, and a sunny smile illuminating his frankly handsome, good-natured features.

"Hello!" he said.

"How's life?" old Murgatroyd

The man at the table rose slowly to his feet, with unutterable surprise.

"Ned Bastowe!" was all he could enunciate.

"In the flesh," returned the other breezily. "And right glad to see you. . . . So I've run you to earth at last, have I, you old beggar." And he advanced and extended his hand, which the other shook, though with some unwillingness. Ned Bastowe stood pumping his arm, smiling all the time into his face.

"You old beggar!" he said several times. "You old hard-done-by beggar! I am glad to see you, and no mistake about it!"

"How did you find me here?" asked Murgatroyd, slightly stammering.

"Aha! that's telling."

"I want to know," with sudden sternness.

"Well, to tell you the truth, old man, I caught sight of your tragic phiz in the Strand about an hour ago, and followed you here—and here we are! And a nice beauty you are!—not to have informed me where you'd lodged yourself, and what you were doing. Me! Your oldest and best pal! I didn't take it as a compliment, I can tell you!"

"Yet," said Murgatroyd, "it's taken you an hour or more to make up your mind whether to come in or not. For I've been back that long."

"Yes," said Bastowe, hesitating. "Ye-es. . . ." He drew up a chair underneath him, and sat down, putting his hat on the table. "You see," he went on, frankly, "I'd a most particular appointment to keep first—honour bright! And I came on here immediately afterwards. You surely don't think, you silly ass, that because—er—of your misfortune——"

"So you knew I was out?" interposed Murgatroyd, indifferent alike to excuse and protest.

"Yes, a month ago, wasn't it?" Bastowe took up carelessly one of the sheets of paper lying on the table. "What y' doing?"

A woman came softly in, and crossed over swiftly to the bowed and shaking man.

"Free-lance journalism."

"A rotten game, in my opinion. Too much over-crowded with the mediocre. And you work like steamship's stokers for a navvy's wage. Now, with your brains——"

"A precious possession they proved!"

"Stuff, man! We all play the fool at some time or other. And it's all a spin of the coin as to whether we're called to account or not. Now, take me for example. If I had my deserts——"

"You wouldn't have five years' penal servitude, Ned."

"Oh, shouldn't I?"

"Not for fraud, anyhow. But we needn't argue about it. It isn't the clumsy punishment that the law deals out that matters so much. If they'd given me twenty-five years instead of five it wouldn't have made much difference. You'd be surprised how homelike it gets. As it was," he laughed a little, "they gave me a sort of sample discount—as a temptation to repeat the order."

"Well, cheero!" said Bastowe, who was showing a trace of discomfort; "you're not dead yet. A long way off it! Comfortable here?"

"Oh, yes. That large firm, the Prison System, teaches its servants to be content with sweet simplicity. You needn't look upset about it, Ned. I assure you penal servitude removes that sort of sensitiveness from a man in strips. But it's a privilege in one way—if only you've got the sense to realise it. I'm going to make my fortune out of it—an honourable fortune from a dishonourable experience verges on the comic, doesn't it? 'Portland by One Who Has Been There.' That's the game, I find, nowadays. Become a blackguard, then sell your story to the highest bidder. Thirty pieces of silver wasn't in it! They give you gold now, my boy, for your life's blood!"

"Oh, chuck it!" said Ned, feeling for his cigarette case.

"Why?" said Murgatroyd, with a white smile. "Imagine my luck if I'd been a reprieved murderer instead. 'Sensations on the scaffold!' 'The pause before the drop!' It would sell like hot cakes, Ned—like hell-hot cakes."

"Go on," said Ned, resignedly. "You always were a queer devil."

"But there's one thing that the papers won't buy for me," said Murgatroyd, ceasing in his pacing up and down and staring in a strange way at his friend.

"What's that?"

"The story of my murder."

"Eh?" said Ned, startled. "You surely don't mean—you ever did that?"

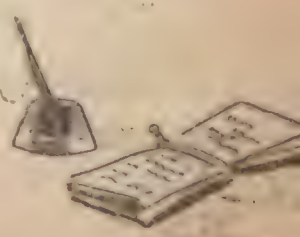
"I murdered a good woman's love once—and that's the foulest crime on God's earth."

"M—m," said Bastowe, at a loss for other words. He proffered his cigarette-case, received a negative shake, and lit up silently himself.

"You weren't there—at her house—on the big night, were you?" went on Murgatroyd, with his ghastly appearance of enjoyment. "My gad! you missed something. You ought to have been there, Ned. You really ought to have been there."

"I was away somewhere," said Bastowe; "Africa—if I remember right. Elephant shooting."

"They were jackal-hunting at home. We were dining when the row started. A young and merry party, my word!—when all at once came a rat-tat-tat at the outer door. I knew what it was, somehow. I'd been expecting it for months. Ever known fear to die, Ned, in one sudden fell instant? It died then—in me. One tremendous inner leap



which almost broke my heart-strings. Then silence—a void—a numbness. A numbness which hasn't left me yet.

"Oh, yes, they wanted me, Ned. They'd been sent on from my rooms. Quite decent chaps—but very business-like. But they made a bloomer they might have avoided. They asked for her mother first and told her of their errand. It's an ugly word is forgery. Her expression, when she came back into the room, was blankly awful. Comically so. I could have laughed—only there was a frozen, stricken face which came into my vision . . . eyes that looked at me . . . a face which had been dear above all other things in life—and now was struck dead—white and anguished and pitiful. I have never fogrotten it. I shall not forget it as long as I live."

He turned his back, and his voice was choked.

Ned got up, and went over and put a hand on his shoulder.

"Old chap . . ." he said.

After a rigid interval Murgatroyd shook him off.

"I'm a fool," he said, hoarsely. "A Fool! . . . It's over now. The execution was quick."

He walked away blindly, then returned and gestured with his hand.

"Give me a cigarette," he said.

For a time they smoked without speaking.

"And you didn't see her afterwards?" said Ned. "No word—no chance to exonerate yourself?"

"There was no exoneration. I was guilty."

"Humph!" said Ned. "You don't know much about women if you think that matters. They only admit one crime—that of not loving them when once they've given you their love. But that, of course, you won't believe till it's proved to you."

"I never had a word with her," went on Murgatroyd, with fixed eyes. "Only one look—and that was enough. After that the judgment."

"What was the beginning of the mischief?"

"Gee-gees, of course! What else?"

"Humph!" said Ned, with a drooping lip. "I know. . . . What was the damage at the finish?"

"A couple of thousand odd."

"I'd have helped you if I'd been here."

"I shouldn't have let you. Scoundrel though I was, I couldn't have let a friend help me to pay what *I* had got to pay. No. But I never believed she'd suffer for it. I believed I should pull through, because it was out of the imaginable order of things that *she* should suffer when I was the only one to blame. Oh, we're fantastic in our faith, Ned, when the loved one has need of our prayers."

"Perhaps the suffering was good for her," said Ned, very quietly. "Perhaps she doesn't mind it—and counts herself better because of it. Perhaps, even, she is grateful to you—grateful because, knowing you had to suffer so much, she too could suffer with you. For women are funny creatures. I'd take heart of courage if I were you. You never know. . . ."

"You're trying to buck me up. It's good of you." Murgatroyd spoke with difficulty. "I'd rather—if you don't mind—not talk of it any more. I'd be glad—if you'd go now.

"One thing," he said, loudly. "I want your word you'll not tell her this address. Your solemn word, mark you. I've made no attempt to find out anything about her. I've kept clear. I don't want to know anything. But she's not dead, or I should feel it inside me. And if she's married——"

"She isn't," interrupted Bastowe. "Oh, no, she's not that—and a long way off it. And as for promising not to give her this address, I'm sorry I can't—because ever since you came out I've been searching high and low for you—at her request. And to-night, when I spotted you—be careful with my arm, man, you're hurting it—I bolted straight off in a taxi and told her. *That* was my appointment—and, by gad, Murgatroyd, if you'd seen the lightening up of her face! She loves you, man!—has loved you all through. What on earth are you up to now?"

With hands that shook like leaves Murgatroyd was taking down his coat from behind the door. He put on his hat.

"She mustn't see me," he said, desperately. "Can't you understand?"

He turned to Bastowe, suddenly extending his hands. His voice broke in agony.

"Don't you understand," he said. "I couldn't face her now?"

"Listen!" said Ned Bastowe abruptly.

Feet could be heard on the stairs again. Murgatroyd stood, with his eyes the only vital things in a dead face, and trembled visibly all over.

"It's she," said Ned. "I told her to give me an hour, in order to break it to you. Keep up, man. Keep up here. I'm going."

He paused uncertainly at the door, watching Murgatroyd stagger over to the table and sit down, burying his face in his hands.

He went out, leaving the door open.

The room became very still.

A woman came softly in, and crossed swiftly over to the bowed and shaking man. She caressed his hair with her hands.

"Dear," she said.

MEN AND PATENT FOODS.

A COMMON-SENSE VIEW OF AN ATHLETIC PROBLEM.

Numbers of men are somewhat easily persuaded that physical perfection is to be found in a patent, or in other words, that by taking such and such a patent food one's health will necessarily improve and one's general condition will follow suit. It is surely time that the right and common-sense view of patent foods was expressed, both for the sake of the foods themselves and for those who take them.

Now a very elementary knowledge of the chemistry of the human body, and of the process of food digestion and absorption in particular, will show that the body requires an infinite number of food elements for its proper upkeep. It is useless, therefore, to take, say, "A.'s" strength bread, "B.'s" muscle-making extract, or "C.'s" endurance meal, if one neglects all other health and strength rules.

It is of no use expecting one food, however excellent its properties, to work a miracle of this sort. It cannot be done.

It must not be supposed that this is in any way a disparagement of patent foods, many of which are so widely advertised nowadays. The patent food—and the proprietors of such will support the statement—is often nothing more than the result of scientific discoveries about food values, ingredients, and preparation, applied to the ordinary articles of everyday diet.

It is notorious that scientific knowledge which may lead to the purification of any one sort of food, is seldom gradually adopted by the people or the general purveyors of food until it is demanded by the people as a necessity.

This fact gives the patent food proprietor his chance. A discovery is made by which (let us say, for the sake of argument) cocoa is robbed of an undesirable quality. Cocoa, so far as the masses of the consumers are concerned, will be taken, for years after this discovery, with its old defect. The patent food proprietor, however, comes along, and, by adopting this simple discovery, steals a march on the ordinary purveyor of cocoa. To this extent the new cocoa is, obviously, better than the old sort; but it is not that the new sort is going to do a hundred and one things for the human consumer which cocoa in any form has done and never will do.

It comes to this, then: the prevalence and popularity of the patent food is really the result of the application of the latest scientific knowledge to the preparation of the food. Athletes, and all who desire physical fitness and vigour, cannot go far wrong, then, in using all such foods when they are the products of reputable firms and are commended by scientific analysis.

Athletes, and especially young athletes should remember that the human body is one composite machine. It is not possible by eating any food, patent or otherwise, to influence one particular part of this machine. All food is taken into what may be called a common melting-pot, and is distributed to the entire frame.

So that in the end it all comes back to this, that pure food, in good quantity is the ideal, and that many patent foods are only the old foods further purified by scientific methods. To rely on one such "patent" to do the work of a complete diet, is ridiculous. When all foods are "patent"—that is when science has produced them to perfection for human consumption—then the always interesting and puzzling problem of what to eat and what to avoid will cease from troubling.

CLIFFORD SKELTON.

THE BELOVED IMPROVIDENTS.

A SKETCH.

By F. PROCTOR WATSON.

Even as I, you whom duty or a certain saving balance of steadiness in your composition has given a little place in the world for you to keep, a tiny position of worth to defend, have some alleviation of these days of making ends meet, and living within your earnings, in the recollection of such of the beloved improvidents as were allotted to you.

An odd crew, a reckless crew, a foolish crew, their part in the early life of all of us is to make fun and merriment and thrilling nights for our amusement at the cost of the opinion of those nearest and dearest to them.

Alienated by their sheer incorrigibility early in life from their home people, who are, of a necessity, weak in discipline, or they would never come into being, you remember them as the young men you envied most of all.

Such winners they backed (they said), such girls they danced with (they told you), such heroes they were in certain countries not their own—where they were certainly considered as anything except prophets, if one does not take into account their big race forecasts.

Such nights you had with them! And, if you have won to that tiny position worth defending, you remember how on all those occasions you never felt in the most wild, lilting, or enthusiastic moments so great as they.

That was that steady balance providence gave you to keep your spirits from making the fool of you that now you recognise they were.

At snooker, pool, billiards, pyramids they were always adepts, could always give you big points. They were proficient enough with the cue. You would have given a lot for the pin-drop silence of the room that accompanied most of their games as they compiled big break after big break.

Middle-class men born, like yourself, you wonder in these later, harder, clearer-visioned days what the money they spent in their apprenticeship to those faultless losing hazards, those artistic nursery cannons, has brought them in this after year. . . .

Bah! It has made, perhaps, passable billiard-markers of them—and you?—why you have a steady earned income and little prospects, little ambitions realised gradually.

But there are nights when you do not want the sincere and the steady friends that your tenacity in the life-fight—a slow, methodical, dreary business, despite its high-sounding designation—has brought you. You do not wish to go and "keep in" with these people at the expense of what on such nights seems an eventless evening. You do not want to sit and say "No," when, out of politeness they offer you the second glass of beer that the same politeness directs you shall refuse.

You find yourself dropping into the West-End haunts again, spending shillings for drinks and tipping waiters. You go where They were known, where a waiter or a barmaid can exchange a recollection of them with you, however much it is going to knock the bottom out of your carefully-limited weekly expenditure.

You want to talk of Jack—he is somewhere in the Wild West, finding himself—and the night he threw the commissionaire out of his own hall. You want to recall gay, handsome Wally and the pretty girl of his, whom even the bar-maid admired—and heaven only knows where he is now.

You raise your glass at such sentimental times to those beloved improvidents, who are the memories of the really happy, irresponsible days that used to be.

8th 'CENTRES' COMPETITION RESULT

The phrase set in our eighth "Centres" Competition was "Telephone Girls." For his phrase "Postmaster's Rubies" the bicycle goes to Mr. L. Clarke, 23, Banks Lane, Stockport.

Consolation prizes of 2s. 6d. each go to Messrs. John Price, 78, Malefant Street, Cardiff; E. J. Morley, 8, Gordon Terrace, Swansea; J. Gilmour, 8, Woodside Place, Shettleston by Glasgow; E. R. Neels, 110, Brightwell Avenue, Westcliff-on-Sea; G. Cambray, 1, Cyril Street, Newport, Mon.; D. Hughes, 6, West View, Mytholmroyd, Yorks.; F. Smith, 11, Goodhead Street, Meadows, Nottingham; H. Smalley, 242, Drake Street, Rochdale; L. A. Stoodley, 26, West End Avenue, Leyton, Essex; T. Coulton, 29, Camden Street, Nelson, Lancs.

CAUSES OF BAD SHOOTING.

We shall begin with faults of execution, and aiming in particular. The commonest fault of all is taking too much or too little foresight into the U or V of the backsight, with the result that the bullet flies high or low.

With the Service rifle, aim should be taken by aligning the sights on the centre of the *lowest part*, not the middle, of the mark aimed at. The top of the foresight must be dead in the centre of, and in line with the shoulders of the U or V of the backsight.

When the tip of the foresight is above the shoulders of the backsight, you have a full sight; when below, a fine sight.

FIX THE EYE ON THE MARK.

A fine sight means that you will be about five inches below the mark for each 100 yards of range. Thus at 600 yards a fine sight would cause you to be 2½ feet below the mark.

Another cause of bad shooting is fixing the eye on the foresight, and not on the mark aimed at, with the effect that the marksman sees the mark indistinctly. This may not matter very much in the case of stationary targets, but when aiming at vanishing targets it is most essential that you should have a clear and sharp image of the mark.

Failure to keep the backsight perfectly upright will cause the bullet to fly low and to the side to which the backsight is inclined.

Unsteady position, failure to get the butt well into the shoulder and the left elbow well under the rifle, and tired muscles, all lead to a crooked backsight and bad shooting.

PRESSING THE TRIGGER.

Beginners often miss the target through not knowing how to press the trigger. Sometimes they give it a hurried snatch or jerk, with the result that the muzzle of the rifle is pulled down and the bullet flies short. Alternatively, they dwell so long on pressing the trigger that they become unsteady, and aim is diverted from the mark.

The direction of the pull-off is diagonally across the butt, and the trigger should be pressed, not jerked, the first joint of the forefinger being placed round the *lower* part of the trigger.

Nervousness is a frequent cause of bad shooting. The nervous man either bobs his head forward or jerks it up at the moment of firing, and the bullet flies anywhere. This nervousness is usually due to "unfitness," and a course of physical training or gymnastics is recommended.

Then there is neglect to adjust the backsight. This may sound very obvious, but have there not been cases of men well in the running for the King's Prize giving a clean miss through forgetting to put up the slide of the backsight at all?

UPHILL AND DOWNHILL.

In regard to extraneous causes of bad shooting when firing on a strange range, you should note whether the line of fire is uphill or downhill. In aiming up you should aim above, and in aiming down, below "six o'clock," but not more than 3ft. in either case. If three feet is not enough, it is better to alter the sights.

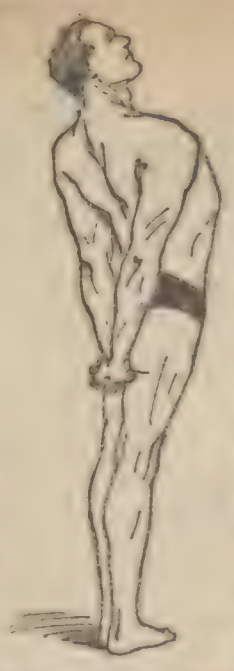
On a bright sunny day you are apt to take too fine a sight because the tip of the foresight is so distinctly seen; contrarywise when the light is bad you are inclined unconsciously to take a full sight. Therefore, on a bright day you should aim a trifle above the usual mark, while in dull weather it generally pays to aim a little below "six o'clock."

Again, when the thermometer is low, the air is dense, and offers more resistance to the bullet than when the weather is hot. Therefore, when Jack Frost is about you want extra elevation, or you will be short all the time. On the other hand, when the barometer is high you want less elevation than when it is low.

For every inch the barometer rises or falls above or below 30 degrees, add, or deduct, 1½ yards per 100 yards of range, and aim or sight accordingly.

A. FORD.

RAPID PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT



A WEEKLY FEATURE.

Conducted by our

PHYSICAL CULTURE EXPERT.

POWER OF THE FOREARM.

ITS IMPORTANCE TO THE ATHLETE.

While developing his upper-arm muscles and other portions of his anatomy, the athlete is apt to neglect his forearm. This is a mistake. A weak forearm means a weak grip, and, although I most certainly do not wish to make a "grip-of-iron" nuisance of you, a powerful grip, combined with a strong yet supple wrist, goes a long way towards success at most ball games.

J. H. Taylor and other leading golfers, for instance, have highly developed forearms and a vice-like grip, though mercifully they do not use it when shaking hands with you.

Incidentally, I think it is a pity that professors of physical culture do not make their systems more interesting to the average man by applying them to the special muscles most used in certain games.

For example, forearm exercises will greatly improve your golf, or at least your "through the green" shots, for when playing with the cleek or other iron clubs it is mainly the right forearm that is the controlling and guiding force, while a firm grip with both hands is essential.

A novel forearm exercise.

Mr. John Ball, perhaps the greatest of amateur golfers, is noted for the length and accuracy of his cleek shots, and it is his sinewy, powerful forearms and hands that enable him to get a very long ball without apparent effort.

Forearm development is also particularly useful to the cricketer, the lawn tennis player, and the boxer, the short forearm jab being a very useful punch at close quarters.

Here is a capital exercise for the forearms.

Take a stout stick or bar of some kind, and suspend from it a dumb-bell or other weight of, say, 12lb. Then perform the following exercises:

1. Holding the bar as shown in accompanying illustration, wind the weight up to it by twisting the bar round, the knuckles being kept uppermost. Then slowly unwind the weight.

2. Wind the weight up, the palms in this case being uppermost and again unwind.

3. With the knuckles of the right hand and the palm of the left hand respectively uppermost, wind the weight up to the bar and unwind. Then reverse the position of the hands and repeat.

TRAINING AND SLEEP.

SHOULD THE ATHLETE'S REST BE FIXED?

Sound, refreshing sleep is essential to the man in hard training, and, indeed, is usually the reward of his exercise and self-denial. At the same time, the dormitory part of the athlete's training is often overdone.

In the old days the 'Varsity oarsman was sent to bed at 9.30 or even earlier, and not allowed to get up till 8 o'clock next morning. This was absurd.

Some men thrive on four or five hours' sleep, and to make such a man lie abed for ten or twelve hours is to do him far more harm than good.

Training usually induces sleepiness, but not always. If the athlete is careful to refrain from exhausting himself, 10 o'clock in the evening may well find him feeling brisk and wakeful, and it is silly to make him go to bed then.

I am not suggesting that a man in training should sit up till all hours, but merely that within reason he should be a law unto himself and go to bed when he feels that bed is the most desirable place on earth.

PHYSICAL CULTURE ANSWERS.

"Tusks" (Ramsgate).—The greenish appearance of your teeth is probably due to tartar. Consult a registered dentist.

R. G. A. (Southsea).—Natural wool is the best material for stockings or socks for walking. If dyed they should be thoroughly washed before wearing. If you wear socks it is a useful tip to wear a garter just above the ankle. This will prevent the socks from working down into the boot and setting up sore heels. Even with stockings, ankle garters will be found useful.

P. M. (Glasgow).—In the Cumberland and Westmorland style to the wrestlers on taking hold stand up chest to chest, each placing his chin on his opponent's right shoulder and grasping him round the body, each placing his left arm above the right of his opponent. Five minutes is allowed in which to obtain and if the hold be not obtained the judge shall order the contestants to take hold across his (the judge's) back, a wrestler refusing to do so being disqualified.

"Worried" (Swindon).—Prematurely grey hair is not necessarily a sign of weakness. One of the strongest men we ever met was perfectly grey at twenty-five. You might as well see a medical man, as the condition may be due to debility or other constitutional disturbance.

A STRONG PERSONALITY is the most valuable asset a man can possess. It ensures for him the respect, esteem and confidence of every man and woman with whom he comes in contact. It spells business and social success. "The St. Cuthbert Course of Will-Culture" (entered at Stationers' Hall) teaches how to develop YOUR Personality—YOUR Powers of Will, Concentration, Self-Reliance, Self-Control, and Personal Magnetism to double their present measure in three to four months. Also greatly enhances your Health and Physical Appearance. The Course consists of four practical graduated, easily-understood Lessons of absorbing interest, with bracing, easily-followed exercises. It is TRULY "A MIND-BROADENER." The fee for the whole Course is only 2/6. No further payments. Why let this small sum stand between you and the attainment of Greater Personality. Enrol NOW!

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If you are short and would like to be tall, why not write to me for particulars of my system? It will are under forty I can increase your height by from two to three inches in three months. No appliances, no special diet, and no drugs are required. :: My method is entirely natural & scientific.

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Specialist in the Increase of Height

(Dept. MM.), 17, Stroud Green Road, London, N.

BENNEDY'S FRIEND

COMPLETE SHORT STORY.

By HORACE J. SIMPSON.

"Peter," yawned McMorran, "I'm finding this Sandyshore rotten dull."

"Any yachting station is that in winter," said Bennedy.

"Oh, but this show is drearier than the rest!" McMorran insisted.

"That's because you don't know Ragglesea," Peter said.

"As it happens, I do."

"But only last week you told me you'd never been up the Raggle in your life!"

"And it was true. But I went over three days ago. I heard there was a bargain to be picked up—an old hooker called the 'Oxbird.' Know her, Peter?"

"I don't. But she wasn't a bargain, I'm taking it?"

"Yes, she was. And I bought her."

Bennedy sighed. There was no keener yachtsman on the East Coast than himself, but for some seasons he had not been able to afford a craft of his own. McMorran was not a yachtsman in the sporting sense of the word. He affected the pastime for some reason Peter Bennedy had never been able to understand, possibly because of its social opportunities; but he was neither sportsman nor sailor. Sometimes he owned as many as three boats at one time, and Bennedy, for sheer love of the game, had more than once acted in the capacity of unpaid skipper for him, but he could never find it in his heart to call McMorran friend. He felt rather than saw a certain shiftiness in the man.

McMorran yawned again.

"Peter—I've been thinking. You're never quite happy when not afloat—eh?"

"I'm pretty keen on salt water," Bennedy smiled.

"Never saw a chap to touch you in that respect," McMorran said. "Well, what do you say to a run over to Ragglesea for this new craft of mine? I want to have her thoroughly overhauled, and the job couldn't be done at that forsaken spot, I suppose?"

"No," Bennedy said, "Ragglesea doesn't boast a shipwright. You'll have to have her brought round to Sandyshore."

"So I guessed. I had thought of sending Chubb, the boatman."

"Oh, don't. I'd be delighted. I haven't had a sail for a month. To-morrow suit you?"

"Any time. I shan't be able to accompany you. I don't care for yachting with the temperature down nearly to freezing-point."

"Right-o!" said Bennedy. "To-morrow, then."

"You'll find her on the mud, about three or four hundred yards above Ragglesea quay. She's only a six-tonner, but you must please yourself as to whether you take a man with you."

"Oh, I'd rather go alone," Peter said. "There'll be more fun in the thing." He pulled out his watch and jumped from his chair. "Here, I say, old man, it's midnight! I'm going home to turn in."

When he called at McMorran's rooms in the morning he found that gentleman had already departed for town.

"Ah, well," chuckled Bennedy. "I'd rather my morning than his. Give me the stinging breeze and a sniff of salt water. He is welcome to his dingy bricks and mortar and smoke and smells. Pah! London's a splendid place to be out of."

Ragglesea is no more than a dozen miles overland from Sandyshore; but to reach it that way necessitates the crossing of two rivers and a slushy tramp across marshes. So Bennedy took the train to Swaileford, the nearest station to Ragglesea, and distant from that world's-end little port about three miles.

As he topped the sea-wall which Ragglesea people rather grandiloquently allude to as The Quay, he sighted quite a small forest of masts and spars, for the Raggle, though all but deserted in the yachting season on account of the fact that craft must lie aground for something like a third of each twenty-four hours, provides about the snuggest winter quarters for small boats in the kingdom. Its mudflats and handy rills render it very attractive to the owner who wishes his dismantled little ship to wait safe and sheltered till the time of sunshine and the spreading of white wings shall come again. But McMorran had said that the "Oxbird" was higher up the river, so Bennedy turned to the right.

A walk of what he judged to be something between three and four hundred yards from the quay brought him opposite several small craft squatting on the shining mud. A Ragglesea boatman was coming in the opposite direction.

"Which of that lot," asked Bennedy, "is the 'Oxbird'?"

"'Oxbi'd,'" repeated the man—"'Oxbi'd.'" He scratched his shaggy head vigorously. "Why, yes, of course!—she's down there off th' quay, sir."

"Sure?" said Bennedy.

"Sartin," the man declared. "I was forgettin' for a moment. She's only been here about a week an' I didn't 'member her name."

"But I was told I should find her up here on the mud. I'm going to sail her round to Sandyshore."

"Well, you've been told wrong, sir. That's th' 'Oxbi'd,' what you can see jest swingin'. Tide's jest liftin' her round. I've a boat down here at th' hard, an' I'll put you aboard if you like."

Bennedy thanked the man and accepted his offer.

"You'll see I was right," the boatman said, as they rowed under the yacht's stern. "O-x-b-i-r-d—there it is in gilt letters, sir."

"Yes," said Bennedy. "I can't understand Mr. McMorran's making such a mistake; but I've found her, anyway—and that's all that matters."

As soon as the boatman had departed for the shore, Bennedy made a close inspection of McMorran's purchase, and was delighted with the boat. Her standing and running gear were in a condition only to be described as excellent. Her cabin fittings were expensive and of tasteful selection.

"But," Bennedy soliloquised, "she's nearly new. And certainly she's a ten-tonner at the least. Artful McMorran! He said she was a bargain, and I'm willing to bet she was, whatever price he paid. Ah, well. I mustn't get too envious. Doubtless I shall get many a fine sail out of her, and more pleasure that the man to whom she belongs."

The wind was blowing straight down the Raggle, so that even though the tide was running up pretty strongly, there was no reason why Bennedy should not heave up the "Oxbird's" anchor and make a start. In a quarter of an hour the yacht was under full sail and making steady progress against the tide.

Off the coastguard ship, a quarter of a mile below the quay, Bennedy heard himself loudly hailed by two men in a boat, pulling rapidly from the shore.

"That th' 'Oxbird,' sir?" a coastguard inquired, sharply as Bennedy pulled his foresail a-weather and hove to.

"Yes," Peter said. "What's your business?"

"What's yours, sir?" the coastguard shot out, angrily, springing aboard.

"Mine is to take this boat round to Sandyshore for her owner," Bennedy told him.

"You'll have to prove that," said the coastguard.

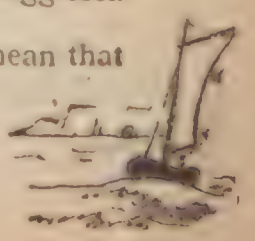
"I can't," Bennedy confessed. "That is, I can't at the moment. I came as a result of a conversation I had with Mr. McMorran last night."

"McMorran?"

"That's what I said. McMorran bought her three or four days ago, and asked me last night to sail her round to Sandyshore, where she is to be overhauled."

"Lumme!" the coastguard cried, addressing his mate. "Hear that, Bill? Overhauled! Why, th' craft was only built last spring! An' you've got hold of th' wrong name, mister. Th' owner of this boat is a Mr. McFarren—only a wee difference, but big enough to make it necessary for me to ask you to step ashore an' tell your tale to th' Ragglesea policeman."

"Great scott," gasped Bennedy. "You don't mean that you suspect me of attempting to steal this boat?"



"What else?" the coastguard replied. "Look here, mister, Mr. McFarren left th' 'Oxbird' in our charge a week ago, an' if she'd been sold or he'd made any change in his plans he'd have let us know. Let go that anchor, Bill!"

The galvanised cable rattled over the little windlass, and the two coastguards lowered the yacht's sails.

"Now, sir," said the man who had done all the talking, "will you come with me without any trouble, or shall I have to ask Bill to come as well?"

"My man," Bennedy said, haughtily, "doubtless you are performing what you conceive to be your duty, and therefore I shall not attempt to obstruct you in any way. I am quite ready to interview the policeman, and possibly I shall be able to convince him that you have blundered. If not——"

But the other coastguard suddenly interrupted.

"Lumme, George!" he cried. "I've just thought of somethin'. Perhaps this gentleman's only made a mistake after all."

"I've made no such thing," Bennedy shot out angrily. "Let's get ashore and see the policeman."

"But you might, sir," insisted Bill. "You might have taken th' wrong hooker. There's another 'Oxbird' at Ragglesea."

"Don't be a chinky fool," retorted his mate. "Where's t'other, then?"

"On th' mud there," Bill said, pointing beyond Ragglesea Quay.

"You're dreamin'," snapped his companion. "I've been stationed here three years, an' never knew any 'Oxbird' but this."

"An' I've been here six," said Bill. "An' t'other 'Oxbird' was very likely here another six before I came. George, she's that old tub what filled an' sank in that breeze last night. There's no name on her, but I recollect when I first came to Ragglesea hearin' people call her th' 'Oxbird.' Besides, there was a carpenter-chap from Swaileford aboard of her th' other day, doin' some odd jobs, an' I asked him, for a joke, if he was fittin' her out for sea. 'Yes,' he says. 'She's sold to a gentleman.' I reckoned he was takin' a rise out of me, same as I was out of him, an' didn't think no more about it."

"It ain't very likely," said the other coastguard, half apologetically; "but, after what Bill says, do you think you've taken th' wrong ship, sir? Accidents do happen, don't they?"

"Well," said Bennedy, who had been thinking hard, "Mr. McMorran told me I should find the 'Oxbird' three or four hundred yards above Ragglesea Quay."

"There you are!" Bill cried, triumphantly.

"And he said she was a six-tonner, whereas this boat is apparently nearer ten. Then he said she was an old boat, which this craft certainly is not. I'm very sorry, but it does look as if I've made a foolish mistake."

"Huh!" grunted the coastguard called George. "I dunno as I ought to take you to see th' policeman for makin' a mistake. I'll tell you what I'll do, sir—I'm not th' man to make unnecessary trouble. You give me your card an' promise me you'll see as I don't get into a bother over this business."

"Certainly! You've your duty to perform, pleasant or otherwise. That is my name. I'm pretty well known at Sandyshore."

"Lumme, sir!" the man cried. "Mr. Bennedy, why ever didn't you say so before? Good gracious! Why your name's good enough for us, sir! There'll be no more trouble over this. I'm very sorry, sir—I am indeed! Is there anything we can do for you?"

"Yes," Bennedy said. "Since you ask it. Will you row me up as far as the other 'Oxbird'?"

"With pleasure, sir. But you won't be able to sail that one to Sandyshore to-day. As Bill says, she filled and sank in that puff of wind last night."

"But I could get a good look at the hooker."

"Yes, sir; you could do that. She's so far up on the mud that she only floats about an hour each tide. Jump in, sir. We'll soon rattle you up to her."

Bennedy gasped when he saw the craft. She was certainly fifty years old. Her gear was in the very last stage of decay. Enthusiastic yachtsman as he was, he would have thought a long time before deciding to sail such a boat round to Sandyshore, even in the finest weather.

Bill, the coastguard, had been rummaging below.

"Lumme, sir!" he cried, as he hitched himself on deck. "No wonder th' boat sank last night. There's a [illegible] her plankin' cut clean out of her. Looks as if that [illegible] penter-chap put a new bit in temporarily, an' forgot to [illegible] back to finish his job. If it hadn't come out last night, [illegible] an' you'd taken th' old tub round to Sandyshore, it would [illegible] have been knocked out th' moment she began jumpin' [illegible] outside th' river. You made a jolly lucky mistake. I [illegible] thinkin'."

"I think so, too," Bennedy returned, drily. "Now will you two good fellows put me ashore? I want to catch an early train from Swaileford."

* * * * * *

Peter Bennedy went to see McMorran at his [illegible] the latter returned from town that evening.

"Ah! Peter, boy," was the greeting he received. "Did you bring the 'Oxbird' safely round?"

"I did not," Bennedy said, coldly. "It would be necessary for you to take out an insurance policy before I attempted such a job."

"My boy," said McMorran, "I have."

"On my life?"

"No—on th' hooker's."

"Ah! When, may I ask?"

"Let me see. About a week ago."

"But you told me you bought the boat only four [illegible] back.'

"Did I? That was a slip."

"Not the only one you've made, McMorran. You [illegible] another when you fancied you could swindle an [illegible] company so easily. I don't know what misrepresentations you made to induce them to issue a policy on that old [illegible] but I do happen to know the means you took to bring about her loss."

McMorran rushed at Bennedy, a murderous blaze in his eyes. Peter dodged, and whistled shrilly. The door was flung open, and in rushed two Sandyshore policemen. "You have given me away!"

"You hound!" McMorran screamed impotently. "I [illegible]"

"And why not?" Bennedy asked, stingingly. "Did you care if I drowned, so long as you could bring off a despicable fraud? And you professed to be my friend! Pah! McMorran, you must be a very devil!"

THE MODERN MAN'S HANDKERCHIEFS.

For years men have exhibited a tendency to use handkerchiefs with coloured borders. Now and again there has been a big spurt in the fashion, but it never lasted very long. Undoubtedly the reason why their use was not long-sustained was that no patterns pleasing to men [illegible] were forthcoming, and that the colours provided, in almost every case, lost their attractiveness after a few visits to the laundry.

Now, however, coloured border handkerchiefs have come to stay. "Everybody who is anybody" has only to say "Pyramid" handkerchiefs to use them henceforth. "Pyramids" are the embodiment of good taste and [illegible] They are woven from the finest cotton, and no [illegible] tion cannot find a flaw in the fabric, which is really [illegible] to use. The patterns, although there is a great variety, all distinctive and pleasing.

Then the "Pyramid" colours are a striking contrast to ordinary handkerchief colours. They are all in perfect taste and cannot fail to please the critical eye of the most fastidious. Moreover, the "Pyramid" colours are [illegible] in, and it is practically impossible to wash them out. One laundress may be actually malicious, and yet not cause the indelible "Pyramid" colours to lose their beauty. So confident are the manufacturers in the durability of these colours that they guarantee to supply six "Pyramid" handkerchiefs free for every one that loses colour in the wash.

Ask your outfitter to show you "Pyramids." You will be surprised to see that they are only 6½d. each, and from the wide range stocked by any up-to-date outfitter you can choose "Pyramids" that are correct wear for every occasion.

Those who desire white in any circumstances should note that "Pyramids" are also obtainable in all-white. If any reader has difficulty in getting Pyramid Handkerchiefs locally, a postcard to "Pyramid," 132, Cheapside, London, E.C., will bring a reply giving the name of the nearest outfitter who stocks these handkerchiefs. A sample "Pyramid" will also be sent, post free, if sixpence be forwarded with the inquiry.

HANDLING ANIMALS.

HOW VARIOUS BEASTS SHOULD BE LIFTED.

Nearly every animal of a size capable of being lifted by human agency requires a different method of treatment if it is to be dealt with safely and skilfully. This article is intended to show the tyro in which of several ways he should treat the various wild and domestic animals with whom it may at different times be his lot to have to deal.

Probably dogs will prove the commonest animals which the average man will have to lift, but not every species of dog even is to be lifted in the same way. Puppies should never be lifted by the fore-legs or shoulders, because this tends to make them grow out-at-elbows. They should be taken up by the scruff of the neck, though with greyhounds, if it be desired to ascertain what good they will be in after life, it is permissible at the age of a week or so to lift them by the tail, when, if they bring their front paws above their ears, they may be safely estimated to have a turn of speed at maturity. Otherwise it is not advisable to take up a puppy by the tail, though many men think that a terrier which will stand the test without a whimper is necessarily a game one.

LIFTING A DOG.

To lift a full-grown dog of any breed under, say, twenty pounds in weight, the best plan is to take him from behind with both hands, lifting him by the shoulders so that his elbows are kept close to his body. Larger dogs, like greyhounds, must be taken up with the left hand under the breast and grasping the off shoulder at the elbow-joint, the other hand and arm being passed round the quarters, the fingers holding the off thigh firmly.

To draw a terrier from an earth or drain, as to hold up a hound for punishment, the method is to take hold of the tail or stern and of one hind leg with the left hand and to use the crop with the other.

Cats may be lifted by the shoulders, though they do not like being picked up by the tail, nor does it hurt them at all to do so. Rats and mice should also be picked up by their tails.

RABBITS AND PIGEONS.

As most children know, the proper way to lift a rabbit is by the ears, and pigeons should be held with one hand pressed firmly but gently over the back so as to keep both wings close against the sides. To pick up a game-cock he must be "legged"; that is, one hand must be passed swiftly under him to seize both legs together above the spurs and round the thigh-joints. The bird can then be held against the body and the wings restrained with the other hand. It is necessary to perform the operation of legging quickly, in one movement, and to get hold of both legs simultaneously, or the operator will run the risk of being spurred in the wrist.

Ferrets require to be picked up in a special manner if the owner does not want to be nipped. The thumb and the first two fingers of the right hand are alone employed. The tail must be taken firmly between the thumb and first finger, while at the same time the middle finger is passed underneath the off fore-leg of the ferret. In this way it is held that it is impossible for the animal to bite the holder. Some men tail the ferret and place it on the left arm before seizing it in the manner first described.

OTTERS AND FOXES.

In the field of sport it is sometimes necessary to handle wild animals, and here it is important to know exactly how to do so, or one may get badly, if not dangerously, bitten. An otter's bite—though he usually takes the piece out—is a clean one, and has no ill-effects; but the bite of a fox has been known to produce blood-poisoning and even hydrophobia; while a badger, if he gets hold of you, will not let go until he has munched the small bones of the hand to a pulp.

A fox should be held with both hands, one grasping him by the loose skin at the back of the neck as near the ears as possible, the other holding him firmly at the root of the tail. In this position reynard is powerless to bite his captor.

Badgers and otters must both be tailed. The former has a somewhat short tail, called in consequence the "short tail," and the instant this is grasped the brute must be swung outwards in a line with the body, and held exactly on a level with the shoulders of the tailer. If the arm is held too low the badger will get hold under the arm-pit, and if too high he will twist himself round and catch his captor by the arm, when the meaning of the proverb about "catching a tartar" will at once become exceedingly and excruciatingly plain to the victim.

An otter's rudder lends itself to the operation of tailing, which is sometimes necessary to bring a hunt to a satisfactory conclusion. It is broad and flat, with an oval section, and so coated with hair as to afford a good grip. But the otter, once tailed, must (like the badger) be swung well clear of the body or he will get the tailer by the thigh and make him regret his temerity and the sum he paid for his breeches, alike.

L. C. R. Cameron.

SINGLE WICKET RULES.

Single-wicket cricket is not much played nowadays, but it is good fun, and a much better game than double-wicket cricket when there are not enough players to make up two elevens.

The laws of single-wicket cricket differ materially from those of the regular game.

For example, at the bowler's end there is no popping-crease, only a bowling crease marked, as usual, and to score a run the striker must touch the bowling stump or crease in a line with his bat, or some part of his person, or go beyond them, and return to the popping-crease at his end.

Then, when hitting the ball, the batsman must have one foot behind the popping-crease, otherwise he cannot score from the hit.

With less than five players a side, byes, leg-byes, and overthrows are not scored, nor can the batsman be caught out behind the wicket or stumped.

And, again, when there are less than five a side, bounds shall be placed 22 yards each in a line from the off- and leg-stump, and the ball must be hit before the bounds to entitle the striker to a run.

Lost ball means three runs to the striker, while there is no limitation to the number of balls that may be bowled in one over, but there must not be more than one minute between each ball.

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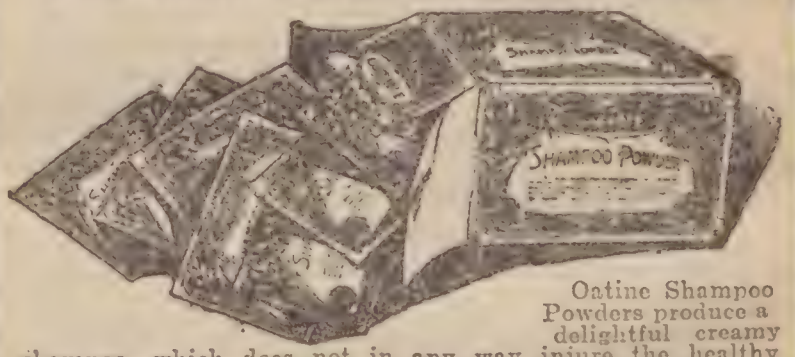

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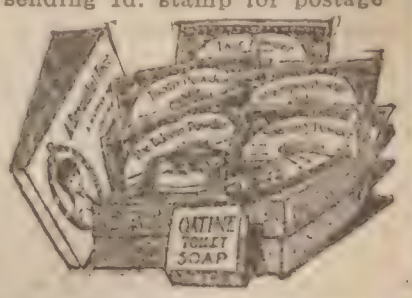
ACCEPT ONE FREE.

In order to thoroughly introduce this, the latest toilet delicacy, the Proprietors will send a full-size 2d. Shampoo Powder absolutely free to all sending 1d. stamp for postage or for 3d. in stamps (½d. stamps preferred) they will send the Free Shampoo Powder, together with a handsome Toilet Outfit, as illustrated, containing a trial size of each of the following preparations: **Oatine Cream**, a toilet necessity for every gentleman for use after shaving; **Shaving Powder; Talcum Powder, Balm, Face Powder, Soap, and Tooth Powder.**



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RECOMMENDING A MAN.

A RISKY PROCEEDING.

One of the most frequently heard questions among men who meet during intervals of relaxation in the course of every working day runs something like this: "I say, do you know a good man for my work—figures, balance-sheets, and that sort of thing? I've just lost A; he's gone to South America, and I'm in a hole to find someone to fill his place. It's worth £2 15s. a week, and there are extras."

The man thus addressed will think a moment, and then ten to one he will say: "I think I know just the chap you want."

There follows a glowing description of "the chap"—who is a capital fellow, smart at his work, and a good fellow to get on with—and so on.

The man who is looking for an employee jumps to the conclusion that he is on the track of a genius, and when the recommended man turns up he is given the job almost without any preliminary discussion.

Then comes disillusionment. The friend who recommended the new employee probably spoke in all good faith, but his knowledge of the new hand was probably founded on far too slender grounds to enable him to form a correct judgment.

The fact is that A, who may have suited B admirably, becomes a square peg in a round hole in C's office.

It is impossible to tell how one's own excellent employee will shape in another man's office. One might just as well say that because whisky and water mix well, that oil and water will do the same. No man can tell how one personality will act in the presence of another.

His own experience is no guide. And thus it is something of a hazard and a lottery to recommend a man except in the most guarded fashion. It is unpleasant all round if the recommendation does not turn out successfully.

A. W.

FINANCE.

(In this section we place at the service of our readers the advice of our Financial Editor. It must be strictly understood, however, that we accept no responsibility for any opinions he may express.—EDITOR.)

Although there is still a nervous feeling amongst dealers in the stock markets, the strike—still unsettled at the time of writing—as a factor seems to have almost disappeared.

Home Rails keep good, and the economies in working now evident will make an excellent showing on the net figures for the six months.

No one can foretell what the after effects of the strike on trade generally will be, but most people are optimistically inclined.

However slack or bad trade may be, it will not affect the Underground Railways of London, and the great scheme of a working arrangement for London passenger traffic must be of immense saving to the companies involved; consequently the Metropolitan, Metropolitan District, Central London, City and South London, and East London Railways will all benefit, as no passenger carrier can very well be left out of the scheme.

The American market has boomed during the week, with copper stocks especially good. That the big Wall Street bankers are encouraging and helping the "bull" movement, there is not the slightest doubt, but when these gentlemen have sold enough stock to suit their "book," you can take your places on the "bear" tack.

Please understand I am not going so far as to advocate a "bear" sale at the moment, but "bulls" should take their profits and sell a few shares on further bulges.

Canadian Pacifics do not show much change on the week, but I am warned by those who ought to know that there is a big rise imminent in these shares.

A market is being formed in Margett's British Sectional Tyre Company shares by one of the largest firms of jobbers in the miscellaneous market; the company has [illegible] orders for tyres exceeding in value the capital of the company eight times over, and the £1 shares now quoted 22s. 6d. are talked as high as £5.

FINANCIAL ANSWERS.

J. W. (Dolgelly).—Not my idea of a safe investment; better keep your money in the savings bank.

S. A. (Ealing).—Although the return would work out a trifle better, I do not consider the security equally good, so do not advise the exchange.

"Charles" (Gateshead).—(1) No. (2) Very risky. (3) I think it would be quite safe to average.

E. S. (Yeovil).—I do not think it would be advisable to increase your holding at present.

H. D. E. (Glasgow).—The new Stock Exchange rules as to commission are not yet in force. Your broker will, no doubt, let you know if it makes any difference in your dealings.

"Stocks" (Limerick).—I hear the company is doing well, and think you should hold your shares.

P. F. (Colchester).—I should prefer the Second Preference.

THE FINANCIAL EDITOR.

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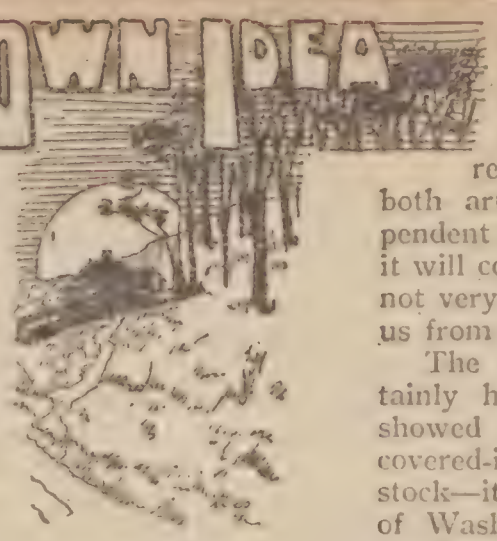
DRAMATIC SHORT STORY.

HIS OWN IDEA

By ROBERT OVERTON.



"There's somebody in the shop, father," said Mrs. Rewman; and Mr. Rewman rose from the well-spread tea-table with a cheerful expression on his red face, which looked all the redder by reason of its contrast with his black tie and black clothes.

Business had been very dull lately, and not really brisk for a long time—the order to be booked would be a blessing. He took the order for granted, for people never waste an undertaker's time as they often waste that of other tradesmen.

In the passage that separated the shop from the room behind it, he composed his features, shaking off the pleased look and assuming one that conveyed, or was intended to convey, an emotion of respectful sympathy. On entering the front premises he bowed with a strictly professional air to the two men who awaited his attendance.

He was in the habit of forming, from the personal appearance of bereaved customers, a quick but usually fairly accurate mental estimation as to the style, and therefore the expense, of the coming funeral; but in the present case he was at a loss where to place the mourners (as he presumed them to be) in the social scale. There was nothing distinctive in their clothes and manner, but he noted that the elder of the two was rather better dressed than the other, and carried himself more confidently. He looked, too, the stronger willed and keener witted, while in conversation he soon showed himself, little as the younger said, to be of far superior education.

"Mr. Rewman?"

"Yes, sir."

"I want to hire a hearse, horse, and coffin from you, Mr. Rewman, for the next few months."

"Hearse, horse, and coffin for a few months! A few months, sir?"

"Yes. The circumstances are peculiar. I am a professional hypnotist—a travelling showman, if you like, and not to put too fine a point on it. This young man . . ."

"'Ow are you?" said his companion, as though he considered this reference to himself as a formal introduction which he was bound to acknowledge.

Mr. Rewman responded to the inquiry by inclining his head in silence. He couldn't make things out at all.

"This young man is my assistant. That is to say, according to the bills, he is my subject, or patient. We perform principally in the provinces, but the show really begins before we start. Suppose, for instance. I have engaged a hall at Colchester, and we are going to open there on Monday evening. At a certain hour in the afternoon, a closed hearse drives into Liverpool Street Station, and a coffin is carried from it into a waiting-room, where he and I are in readiness. I put him to sleep—a trance, you know —hypnotic trance."

"I've heard of such things," murmured the undertaker. "But whether they're genuine or only a fake . . ."

"That aspect of the subject need not enter into our negotiations, Mr. Rewman," interrupted the showman rather irritably. "I'm only telling you what our business is in order to lead up to a matter of business with you. After I have thrown the subject into a deep sleep, he is placed in the coffin, which is immediately closed and put in the train."

"Not screwed down?"

"Air-holes."

"I see."

"On arrival at Colchester we are met by another hearse, in which the coffined sleeper is driven to the hall, where he is exposed to the public at so much a head, for a week, or whatever period we have advertised, during which I lecture, as a rule, twice a day. At the end of the period, at an hour anounced beforehand, I wake him up—the dead comes to life."

The "subject" had interjected a few remarks during this explanation, but only to be checked by his senior, who now proceeded to answer the definite question of the half-bewildered attending Mr. Rewman as to what he had to propose.

"Well, it's like this. I can't afford to do without the coffin—they're the properties that work up the sensation, you understand—but it's a nuisance to have to arrange for a different hearse at every place we visit on a tour. Now, if I can come to reasonable terms with you for the hire of both articles—and a horse—I shall be independent of local men, and on the whole I think it will come cheaper. As a rule, our towns are not very far apart, and the props. could follow us from one to the next."

The funeral furnisher reflected. He certainly had all that was wanted, and trade showed no signs of improvement. That covered-in hearse of his was almost dead stock—it was too old-fashioned in these days of Washington cars. As for a horse, there would be no difficulty on that score, for the man he himself hired from had been saying that half his stable were eating their heads off.

There was really no reason why he should not entertain the unexpected and surprising proposition that had been sprung on him so suddenly—subject, of course, to a wide enough margin of profit. How much should he ask? Such an arrangement being without precedent in all his experience, he had nothing to go on. Acting on the sound principle that it was easier to come down than to go up, he started high—and regretted he had not started higher, for his suggestion was agreed to almost off-hand.

His customer, he soliloquised, might be a very good showman, but was certainly a bad bargainer, of whom he might be able to take further advantage in the settlement of details. These were soon arranged, and the parties to the transaction separated on excellent terms with each other.

"I told you it would be all right, George—how he swallowed that cock-and-bull yarn about a hypnotic show!" laughed the "Professor" to his "subject" as they got outside, adding in tones of conviction: "The nearer the time comes for putting my idea into practice the more certain I am that it'll be the making of us."

"What's the first job?" asked George.

"That crib off Woodford Green."

"What night are you laying yourself out for?"

"The first suitable one after we've got the dead-cart. Mind you're ready when I let you have the office."

"All right, Joe. I hope this 'ere rum lay of yours will turn out as you say, but I'm going further in with you than ever I meant to."

"You've gone too far to turn tail now, any way."

"I don't want to do that, Joe. And if this new style of doing things don't get give away, there won't be nobody in it but you and me."

"By the time it's found out we shall have feathered our nest, George."

Not many nights afterwards the two were together again, both seated on the box of a hearse moving along the lonely Forest road that leads to the higher part of Woodford—George driving. He remembered his way well, taking several twists and turnings presently without hesitation, though the night was almost as black as the horse.

At the top of a by road that dipped into Epping Forest he pulled up.

"Near enough, Joe?"

"Just right, I reckon. The house can't be many yards ahead, though I can't see it. If I want you any nearer by-and-by I'll give the signal, but I expect I shall be able to manage the swag by myself."

Joe felt for a sack under the seat, and got down. His feet made no sound as he moved off into the deeper shadows beyond. But before he emerged from them thirty minutes afterwards, the waiting George heard him distinctly before he saw him indistinctly. He could be carrying no weight to come so fast!

"What's gone wrong?"

"Drive like hell! I was forced to do it. Do you hear, George? I was forced to it. The old lady woke. She'd given one scream before I could get my hands round her throat. Drive faster, man, drive faster. When I took them off, she was going to scream again—and I'd finished her before I knew it. I heard someone moving, then someone coming. The door opened. The two servants who saw me had lights in their hands. I dropped from the window."

George's face was whiter than that of the panting man beside him.

"Are you sure?"

"Quite. It's the rope for us if we're caught—for me, at any rate. Damn you, what are you doing?"—for George had brought the hearse to a sudden stand, leaped out, and was unlocking the door behind.

"Joe," he said hoarsely, "jump down. We're both in the same boat. If you give yourself away, you give me away with you. You're shaking like a leaf, and if you could see how you look you'd know what I mean when I tell you that no patrol would let us pass when we reach the lights. Your face 'd want a lot of explaining. More than that, in a few hours you'll have been described by them who saw you, and the less anybody else sees of you the better."

He lifted the lid from the coffin. Always hitherto ordered and influenced by the other, now he ordered and influenced that other—unnerved, unstrung.

"Get in there—and there'll be no questioning *me*. What if there is? I'm driving a body, and can show the coffin. I'll take you to your place, and then we can talk. This blasted idea of going about the country with a dead-cart to throw everybody off the scent was *your* idea, and 'ere's a chance to prove that it's up to more than ever you thought. Instead of stowing the swag in the stiff's box, stow your own carcase in it."

Never was there a blood-guilty one whose first consuming instinct was not to hide. Helped by his companion, the shivering burglar with difficulty squeezed his thin body within the coffin. George replaced the lid, shut fast the door of the hearse, and turned the key of the lock.

Then, with an oath and a curse, he cried to his prisoner in a frenzied voice: "We shall reach the Police Station in ten minutes. I bargained with you for robbery, not for murder!"

. . . . . .

The murderer was hanged. The sentence George received did him a lot of good.

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The Quadrant Cycle Co. have favoured us with copies of the latest Art Catalogues illustrating their brand new 1912 models, and also with a budget of information which clearly shows how easily one of their excellent machines can now be obtained from their up-to-date factory in Coventry upon the easiest of easy payment terms.

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BRIEF REPLIES.

[Under this heading we endeavour to answer all inquiries of general interest. No fee whatsoever is accepted. Where a prompt reply is required, a stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed.]

"Feather" (Bristol).—The exact wording of the Amateur Rowing Association's rules against working amateurs is as follows: "Who has ever been employed for money about boats, or in manual labour, for money or wages; or is or has been by trade or employment for wages a mechanic, artisan, or labourer, or engaged in any menial duty."

L. C. (Hampstead).—"Jokes" on religious subjects are not acceptable.

"Kenneth" (Luton).—The Army and Navy Club was originally nicknamed "The Rag and Famish," the allusion being to the flag flown over the clubhouse and the alleged bad cuisine. It is now "The Rag."

C. P. (Tooting).—Toots!

B. P. (Bayswater).—Most London golf clubs admit six-days-a-week members—i.e., you may not play on Saturday or Sunday—at reduced fees, often without an entrance fee.

"Spot" (Leytonstone).—John Roberts was born in 1847, and won his first Professional Championship in 1870. Wonderful player as he still is, we hardly fancy his chances against Gray should the proposed match come off. Young and the middle pocket will be served.

D. L. C. (Salford).—An amateur boxer is not necessarily disqualified for competing against a professional for a prize, but he must first obtain the express sanction of the Amateur Boxing Association to do so.

C. F. (Lincoln).—Both umpires must agree as to the ground being fit for play. Should they not agree play must not commence until they do. Umpires are specially instructed by the M.C.C. not to declare the ground unfit for play merely because it is wet, and the ball would consequently be slippery.

J. A. D. (Sheffield).—Fred Archer was a few weeks short of thirty when he died on Nov. 8, 1886. His last mount was Tommy Tittlemouse, in the Castle Plate, at Lincoln four days previously. His last winning mount was Falmouth's Blanchland, in the Houghton Stakes, Newmarket, on Oct. 29, 1886. R.I.P.

"Fred" (Newport).—Purchase of Army commissions was abolished about forty years ago. The price varied in regiments and ranks purchased, but to reach the command of a regiment by purchase an officer had to lay out between £2,000 and £5,000.

B. J. S. (Bedford Park).—"John Company" was the Honourable East India Company.

C. A. (Portsmouth).—You deserve to be tried by Justice Eve, and given ten years.

"Inquirer" (North Berwick).—Certainly a Jew can be a Freemason. The only religious test is that the candidate must acknowledge the existence of a Supreme Being. Mohammedans, therefore, are eligible. The Roman Catholic Church, however, forbids her members to become Freemasons on the ground that Freemasonry is a secret society."

T. J. (Liverpool).—Saddles with knee-rolls do not look as smart as the plain flap variety, but are softer and more comfortable, and are to be recommended to the elderly rider like yourself.

H. G. W. (Dover).—The widow of an Army lieutenant killed in action or dying within seven years of wounds received in action may be granted a gratuity of £1,200 plus a pension of from £40 to £80 a year. At the other end of the scale the widow of a field-marshal may in exceptional circumstances be given a gratuity of £3,500, and a minimum pension, not less than £120 a year.

H. C. (Euston Road).—"Free consultations" is a favourite bait with medical quacks of one kind or another, but we have yet to meet anyone who, having sought a "free consultation" was not told that he required expensive treatment.

R. M. (Leeds).—The "curse of Scotland" is the nine diamonds. There are various explanations of this name, but the most probable one is that centuries ago the nine of diamonds was an all-important card in a gambling game by which many Scottish nobles and gentlemen were ruined.

A. S. J. (Birmingham).—It is a foul stroke to strike the ball with any part of the cue except the point.

T. M. (Greenock), **G. C.** (Warrington), **C. W.** (Gateshead), **R. McF.** (Aberdeen), **D. H.** (Prestwich), **T. C. T.** (Wokingham), **H. A.** (Southampton).—Right thanks to you.

CYCLE LAMPS

PROS AND CONS OF THE DIFFERENT TYPES.

Just as no man will admit that the school he attended in his youth is inferior to that of any other man, so do most men valiantly defend the virtues of their sporting accessories, and one of the points on which every cyclist prides himself is his lamp.

Consequently, in discussing the relative merits of the different kinds of bicycle lamps, I am likely to tread pretty heavily on the toes of veteran wheelers who have their own pet kinds; but it should be made clear that this article is mainly for the man who is freshly taking up the sport, and is in doubt as to the kind of lamp he should buy.

ACETYLENE OR OIL.

The great question that will assail him is, "Shall it be an acetylene or an oil-lamp?" and the answer, as usual, depends on circumstances. Experience shows that for the man who only rides short distances, the oil-lamp gives better results, by reason of its being simpler in its construction and use. It is, moreover, easier to keep clean. Say, for instance, that your only occasion to cycle by night is when you are detained late in town and cycle a mile or so between your suburban station and your home. Then the oil-lamp is all you need.

In price you will find oil-lamps range from about 2s. to 12s. 6d.; but a fair average price to pay is 8s. or 9s. The man who economises by paying about 4s. or 5s. for his lamp does not get as good a light, because at the higher price it will be fitted with a good reflector at the back, whereas in the cheaper kinds, the office of reflector is performed by the highly-polished interior of the lamp, which, however, will rapidly become tarnished and dull with use.

PRICE TO PAY.

Always use a good quality oil. It is much better to pay, say, 4½d. for half a pint than 2½d. for the same quantity. Also, before lighting up, always brush off the charred end of the wick. Use a match for this. Do not cut the wick with scissors, for to do so causes a "cabbage end."

Acetylene lamps, for riders who do not object to their glare, are more suitable than the oil variety for long-distance riding. A good lamp of the kind ought to burn for at least three and a half and generally four hours, a space of time which will allow of a very satisfactory spin. There are not many men hardy enough to tackle a night ride of, say, from London to Brighton; but if you are one, a single charge of carbide and water should be sufficient to light you for the entire distance.

In the case of acetylene, as in the matter of oil, lamps, you can give very small and very large prices. An acetylene lamp, of a kind, can be had for as little as five shillings, but it is advisable to give something like half a sovereign for it.

FITTED WITH A HOOD.

The man, however, who can afford to give a shilling or two more can get a lamp with a nickel hood fitted on the top, which has the effect of throwing the ray of light on to the road for some yards in front of him, and not, to make a misquotation, wasting its radiance on the upper darkness. This avoids the swears that result from a more or less nasty joit over something that was so close under the front wheel as to be missed by the ray of the lamp.

Here are a few hints to acetylene users. In cleaning the working parts, wash away the caked carbide with *warm* water. Cold makes it stick harder. Never let your burner "die out." If you do, soot will form in the burner holes, and necessitate the purchase of a new one. Always blow out the light, when done with.

Finally, a word about candle-lamps. These are hardly to be recommended. In hot weather the candle melts all too quickly; in winter you will hardly ever get it to light in the open, and, in any case, the melted wax makes the cleaning of the inside a dirty and tedious job.

W. S. Gilling.

WHY MEN DON'T MARRY.

It is fashionable to say nowadays that neither men nor women are anxious to get married. They want to "have a good time first," it is said, as though "good times" and marriage were incompatible.

The money question is also dragged in. "Girls want to begin where their parents left off" and "men want so many luxuries" are two more popular tags on the same subject.

But one and all are sheer nonsense, moonshine, balderdash, rubbish, and rot. The real reason why many young men don't marry is—their parents.

Let a young man indicate his willingness to marry on a small income and struggle along with the girl he loves, and his parents behave as if he had confessed a heinous crime or contemplated committing one.

It is about time that the absolutely wrong-headed interference of parents with their sons' marital intentions was stopped.

Parents imagine that they are going to control their offspring till they are grey and feeble. A man naturally hesitates to do what is obviously painful to his parents.

The annoying part of it is that parental interference is done, apparently, from the mere love of meddling. No man ever yet chose a wife who found favour in his parents' sight.

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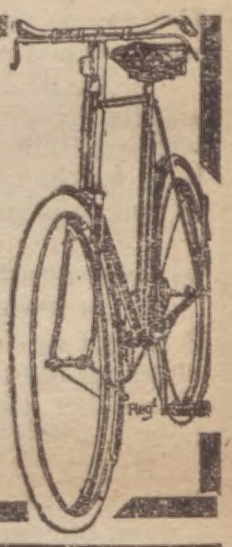

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The Outer Man

A WEEKLY FEATURE.

Conducted by

CAPTAIN L. H. SAUNDERS.

COPYING OTHER PEOPLE.

When you see a man who strikes you as being really well dressed you have a strong inclination to copy him. If you are injudicious, you do so.

I do not mean to say that you should avoid having your clothes like those of other people, for the nearer your dress may be to the fashion of the moment the more comfortable you feel; but there is a difference between being correctly dressed according to the general fashion and taking one definite man as your model.

To begin with, his figure may not be the same as yours. He may be tall, and able to carry off a certain style of dress which would only make a short man look ridiculous.

I have dealt at some length with clothes and complexion, and have tried to indicate which clothes are suitable for men with red hair, brown hair, and so forth. Your model may be a fair-haired man who looks very well in a colour that to you, who are dark, would be quite unsuitable.

RIDING BREECHES AND HEIGHT.

A correspondent sends me a plaintive wail asking why it is that he does not show to advantage in riding breeches, although most other men do. The explanation is contained in another part of his letter, where he mentions that his height is only five feet four.

Riding breeches and a jacket, breaking up the figure as they do, can scarcely be recommended for the short man, unless, of course, he is actually going to ride in them.

The long sweep of a well-cut trouser leg adds considerably to the height, while breeches, breaking the line at the knee, cut up the figure into sections, as it were, and make you seem shorter.

Jockeys and most men connected with racing stables are short, and their breeched figures would look ridiculous were it not that they are so eminently workmanlike, and our admiration for the sporting abilities implied stifles our criticism; but the man who does not require breeches as a suitable costume for his day's work should avoid them unless he is of average height or taller.

OVER-LONG JACKETS.

Another mistake made by short men, particularly in working-class districts—where the average height is not usually great—is to have the jacket of a lounge suit cut too long.

Such a jacket should never come lower than the fork. It should, in fact, just cover the seat of the trousers and no more.

Cheap tailors, finding that long lounge jackets tickle the fancy of many of their patrons, have almost forced these garments upon the young working man—to his detriment, so far as appearance goes.

HOME-MADE HUNTING STOCKS.

While nothing looks neater as a set-off to a riding costume than a hunting stock, probably no article of attire is more troublesome unless it is perfectly made and perfectly managed.

A badly cut or badly tied stock will not keep in place. The tie part rides up till it finds its way outside the waistcoat, and the collar part works loose or overtight.

Even the best made hunting stocks, however, are not always perfect in the matter of finish, as a few visits to the laundry prove. Not enough cloth is allowed where it is turned in to be sewn at the edges. The sewing is also carelessly done, and frayed edges soon appear.

The man who is blessed with a neat-fingered sister, or sweetheart or wife who likes to make things for him, might do worse than let her direct her enterprise upon the making of a hunting stock.

Give her as a model an old stock that fits you perfectly and is correctly cut and designed. Let her take it to pieces to see the inner construction, and help her in her choice of material.

WATCHING MILITARY TAILORS.

A correspondent, who is a Territorial officer, asks my advice concerning certain uniforms which have just been sent home to him from his tailor. His natural pride of new possession is somewhat lessened by the fact that certain little details in the garments are not quite to his liking.

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I have been able to give him the necessary assistance, and to direct him how to have things put right, but the point I want to raise is the fact that military tailors want watching just as closely as civilian.

A man who is new to soldiering is apt to overlook a sartorial fault, putting it down to something that, though not quite to his taste, is according to the regulations. But regulations do not specify a collar the hooks and eyes of which do not come directly opposite, neither do they specify overalls which do not come down properly upon the instep of your boot.

Perhaps the military tailor is at his worst when cutting service riding breeches.

I do not think I shall be wrong in saying that in the average mounted Territorial corps you will find, even among the officers, not more than half a dozen men with really well-cut breeches. Some of these have doubtless been fitted happily because their figures happen to be easy ones to fit, but others have attained success in the matter not by luck, but because they have had their breeches cut not by the military tailor but by a breeches specialist.

DISPOSING OF THE LACES.

Talking of service riding-breeches—which, of course, are laced and not buttoned down the leg—I think I once mentioned before the best way in which to dispose of the knot of the lace.

The lacing goes down the front of your shin-bone, and if you tie it there the knot is pressed into your shin by your gaiter.

The right thing to do is to bring the two laces round the leg so that they meet on the fleshy part and tie them there, where the knot will not hurt.

FISHING WADERS.

A correspondent asks for information about fishing-waders. They are useful articles, and, even if you do not go in for regular wading, will save many a chill caught from kneeling on damp grass, or getting wet crossing a stream.

Wading stockings, brogues, and thick woollen socks, to be procured from any fishing tackle maker, will cost about £2.

Wading stockings and brogues can be obtained all in one piece, but they are easier to dry when separate. After fishing, the stockings should be turned inside out and hung up to dry in a warm place, but not near a fire.

MR. CHURCHILL'S HAT.

In answer to "J. L. C." (Halifax), I am not sure, but I rather think that the peculiar, square-shaped, high-crowned hard felt hat worn by the First Lord of the Admiralty is known as a "Derby."

However, it is not so much Mr. Churchill's hat, as the head underneath it that concerns us, and, without introducing politics, I think I may say that Mr. Churchill is showing a very level head in his new position.

Apropos Parliamentary hats, the most distinctive ones in the present House of Commons in addition to Mr. Churchill's are the immaculate "topper" of Colonel Mark Lockwood, which, like its owner, always looks as if it had come out of a band-box, the big sombrero of Mr. John Ward, and the silk hat of Mr. John Hodge, the only Labour Member, I think I am right in saying, to sport one.

SOFT HATS.

Soft hats are excellent things for travelling in and are quite permissible for ordinary town wear, but it is well not to lose sight of the fact that they never look quite so smart as a trim bowler.

Do not think for a moment that I am condemning the soft hat, for there are many men whom it suits particularly well; but when you want to look as spick-and-span and neat as possible, a bowler probably fills the bill better than a soft hat.

It is difficult to describe the right type of soft hat, but I can assure you that it does not in any way resemble that awful inverted soup-plate which has become associated with visitors from America.

These American soft hats, which are quite circular and have the crown pressed in all round, are produced in all shades of what I believe are called art colours. Anyhow, you can get them from cobalt blue to russet brown.

They are finding considerable popularity with the young bloods of the poorer quarters of our large towns, but they are not, and never will be, popular with men of taste.

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